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COLLECTED ESSAYS OF PHILIP GUEDALLA

III

MEN OF WAR

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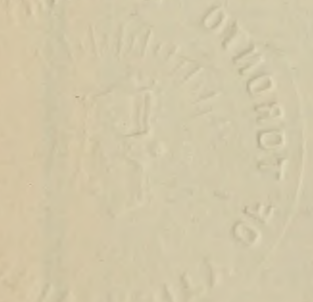

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THE SOLDIERY

One would have said at the first blush (and the student of history—especially of Continental history—should always have a blush ready) that the artist who sets out to draw scenes from Swiss history is apt to draw blank. That country, so attractive to the eye and uniformly obliging to the casual visitor, is curiously baffling to the historian. Apart from the distinction of contributing Zwingli to the last page of every encyclopædia, it wears singularly few honours in the European record, and the historical imagination falls back on scenes in which nearly all the most prominent parts were played by foreigners. Napoleon crossing the Alps; Hannibal, by a curious association of ideas, doing the same; Mr. Gibbon writing in

Lausanne; M. de Voltaire writing at Ferney—these, and a few more, appear to be the sole events of European importance in Swiss history, and one arrives gradually at a pained realization that the principal actors in them were not Swiss. Even Baedeker was a German. The national Valhalla (and surely a country so admirably supplied with the raw material of sculpture cannot subsist without a Valhalla) must contain little beyond the unheroic figures of MM. Nestlé and Suchard; and even the bolder gesture of William Tell is too closely associated with a simple article of diet to be completely dignified.

Switzerland, to the uninformed observer, must always seem to be one of those fortunate countries (the United States is another) which have a great deal of geography and very little history. Delightful to the map-maker and the railway-engineer as affording such extensive employment to the ingenuity of either, these favoured regions are equally delightful to the schoolboy, because there are no dates to remem-

ber. If there was a Declaration of Swiss Independence, no one is expected to know when it took place. If there was ever a Swiss Civil War (beyond the normal competition of rival hotel managements), it has escaped the notice of those indomitable amateurs of Civil Wars who investigate them for the films. Swiss history is the one subject of which a historian may safely confess ignorance. Even Mr. Beerbohm, to whose unwritten history of the Regency we owe so much, almost forgets his urbanity when his pen peoples Switzerland with "a smug, tame, sly, dull, mercenary little race of men"; and when Mr. Bernard Shaw wishes to make the profession of arms ridiculous, he introduces a Swiss soldier.

Perhaps they are right. Perhaps the effort of living up to that tremendous background has exhausted the moral resources of the Swiss, until they have become little more than the tiny (but quite faceless) human figures which adorn the foreground of every competent land-

scape drawing. Yet one discovers with half a shock that the upper valleys of the Alps were not always populated by a race ready to oblige with an echo or some *edelweiss*, that there were Swiss industries before the loud tick of a cuckoo-clock had ever sounded across the mountain pastures, that Switzerland, in fact, possessed in its time most of those virtues of the mountain-tops which are associated, in the imagination of Mr. Lloyd George, with the far lower contours of Wales. There is always something a shade exasperating about the republican virtues. It was found by his countrymen to be so in the case of Aristides; and the peculiar quality of "sturdiness," which is generally attributed by historians to the inhabitants of undulating territories, makes only the most limited appeal to the imaginative eye. One could wish somehow that their ideal was a shade taller. But in Switzerland the facts are against them.

That is, perhaps, why there is something

almost startling in the discovery of the Swiss infantry. There is in the military history of Europe a dynasty of the successive master of Continental battlefields. Before von Moltke's men in spiked helmets, it was the Grenadiers of the Guard. Before the French came the Spaniards. And before the slow pounding step of the Spanish musketeers, it was the Swiss pikemen. One half expects to-day to find them charging with the national cry of "Coming, Sir"; and there is a good deal of irreverent reminiscence from which one must shade one's eyes, if one is to peer back into a time when tall Switzers lounged in bright colours under the high arches of Renaissance doorways. Yet in that time, before the national aptitude for neutrality had been developed to its full growth, it was Swiss history rather than Swiss geography that constituted the main interest of the country. The detachment of Switzerland from the lumbering procession of heraldy and anachronisms miscalled the Holy Roman Empire is,

for almost all of us, a strange new story. For a moment one sees the bullet-headed little men with a livelier expression in their eyes. But the vision fades; and as it passes, the Swiss are overwhelmed once more by the climate or the scenery. Switzerland becomes again an inert patient on the green table of Europe. Wise men bend over her with new prescriptions; Napoleon advises a thorough change of Constitution; someone invents the ignominious expedient of neutrality, which has acted like an anæsthetic on Swiss politics; and through it all Switzerland remains completely, blandly passive, "perfectly civilized and strifeless," as one historian sees her, "jewelled all over with freedom."

There is no gleam of the old light, no faintest echo of the heavy step of the Swiss infantry. We have instead the mild tap at the door, the cautious tread, the bright deposited tray of our kind familiar Swiss, with their "nine thousand six hundred pairs of sheets and blankets,

with two thousand four hundred eider-down quilts . . . ten thousand knives and forks, and the same quantity of dessert spoons . . . and . . . three native languages." That is the last that Europe sees of the pikemen of Marignano. One has an uneasy feeling that if an invading army passed the Swiss frontier, its luggage would be taken upstairs, whilst a courteous management arranged to accommodate all officers above the rank of major in rooms with a view of the glacier. Even the republican milk of mountain pastures is sold in tins at grocers' shops, while the citizens of the Confederation perform kindly but unimpressive duties in the grill-room.

Yet the exiled Swiss may have a future (it would be quite in their tradition), when the proletariat, having finally succeeded in learning one of those stirring songs which young gentlemen of the middle class are always writing for it, marches on the West End. There will be pale faces in the American Bar, and a low drone

of men calling on the Prophet from the deft, dark persons whose normal occupation is the confection of strong coffee in small cups. But from somewhere up the street they will hear a hoarse cheer, as the long line of white shirt-fronts drives at the Revolution in the last charge of the Swiss Guard.

MINISTERS OF STATE

Any stigma, as the old saying is, will serve to beat a dogma. The unpopularity of received opinions renders it almost cowardly to disprove them, and one hates to hit a platitude when it is down. But there are instances in which the exposure of popular errors is something more than an arrogant exercise worthy to amuse the expansive leisure of Sir Thomas Browne and may even be a source of positive instruction. One remembers the case of the statesmen. There was a class of persons to whom public opinion, deluded by their solemn exterior, ascribed the most dazzling range of qualities, and acquiesced, consequently, in their assuming a complete control of public affairs. They stood about in attitudes that looked well in marble trousers on a monument; and their

gifts, which consisted mainly in a knack of thinking about nothing and looking all the time as if they were thinking about something else, were invariably referred to in tones of more than obituary veneration. They acquired a dangerous monopoly of international relations in the days before the war had demonstrated quite how dangerous that monopoly was; and the solemn mystery of diplomacy was entrusted to their absent-minded charge. The popular error about them was extremely simple. It was universally believed in Europe, prior to the year 1914, that above their admirable (or, as their favourite authors wrote, immaculate) neckwear and behind their rather glassy stare they united in some overcrowded brain-cell the two qualities which the heroes of Mr. Seton Merriman had taught the world to respect. Strength, it was thought, and silence were the essential ingredients in the statesman's make-up. Other elements might be thrown in—Celtic fervour, Latin logic, Teutonic thoroughness. But these

were mere private idiosyncrasies. The essence of statesmanship (one is thinking of the qualities which steered the world firmly into the *impasse* of August 1914) was believed to be the silent strength of the great hills—of Welsh hills sometimes, or the grey Cevennes, or the Harz, or even (if one is to be quite neutral about it) of the Matterhorn. One saw them as tight-lipped men, a little grey about the temples, who read confidential documents without a word, flung them (for greater secrecy) into bright red boxes, and snapped down the lids with a sympathetic click from a prognathous profile. They were all (how faded the vision seems) as silent as the circulation manager of a failing newspaper, as reserved as royal seats at a charity matinée. That, in bold outline, was the popular conception of statesmanship in its great days. And then, with the malicious suddenness of a conjurer among rabbits, the war waved a wand over them, and they came out quite different.

One has suffered agonies of exasperation

from the current doctrine that the war altered everything. It is a great saving in historical research; but those of us who trail the cloudy, if glorious, appendage of a pre-war education are reluctant to discard the entire contents of our *cerebella* in favour of the miscellaneous and divergent speculations which appear to have usurped the place of knowledge since the battle-flags were furled and the ear-drum throbs no longer with the syncopated eloquence of our national leaders in time of war. Yet there is no use in denying it: something very odd has come over the statesmen. The war seems to have affected them in much the same way as Prince Charming took the Sleeping Beauty. They came to. Their icy reserve melted like the snow in spring-time; and as they dropped suddenly out of those angular poses which had earned them the awe of generations, those frozen lips began to speak. And they have not, at the moment of writing, left off.

The orgy of self-revelation, which has set

every minister in Europe babbling confidences with the easy flow of a schoolgirl in a moment of expansion, was a progressive business. The spate did not start all at once. In the earlier stages there was a staid trickle of confessions, cast mostly in the decorous form of official publications. Great Britain started it with the pale gleam of a White Paper. Then France weighed in with a Yellow Book. The Russians turned out something tasty in orange; Belgium was discreetly grey (so like a neutral); the Austrians went in for red; and soon all the primary colours in the spectroscope were exhausted by the original belligerents, and late-comers were driven out into the more garish creations of aniline research. The tone of these early revelations was almost uniformly sober. The utmost that was confided to the public was an impressive spectacle of a number of slightly flustered gentlemen engaged in exchanging solemn documents couched in a jargon which the usage of centuries had deprived of all mean-

ing. It was all a little like the drivers of two converging trains upon a single line absorbed in an exchange of courtesies, of estimates of distance and weight of impact ; and none of the passengers had (in the official correspondence) the indelicacy to tamper with the communication-cord. That was the first stage of the international disclosures.

The next movement was a trifle livelier. Towards the end of the war, and increasingly as the Great Peace grew in intensity, the statesmen of the Old World united in a chorus of confessions. The shrill utterance of men who had won the war united with the more guttural speech of those who had caused it, and our ears were assailed by sonorous repetitions of the same thing in different keys. It was all a little like the culminating moments of a Handel Festival. From the angle of the British listener much of it was a shade tame, because we have not yet been privileged to overhear any considerable body of the confessions of our own

masters. For this country, almost alone in Europe and with that mysterious tolerance to which most British institutions owe their survival, continued for years after the Armistice to employ the official services of those who had conducted its affairs during the war, The results, however, becoming apparent, an ampler leisure was politely afforded to some of the more remarkable actors in which to record their experiences on the stage.

Meanwhile, the *amateur* of revelations subsists principally upon foreign importations. These are generally couched in that grey medium of language which is adopted by the translator, and under this drab disguise one has some difficulty in distinguishing between the utterances of Russian generals and German statesmen. The transformation is least devastating in its consequences when the author of the original is a diplomat by profession, since his professional aptitude for meaningless expressions finds an adequate equivalent in the tepid formulæ of

the translator. One often fails to catch the vigorous utterance of a foreign politician in his mild English garb. But the true diplomatist is excellently reflected. There is a Prussian Excellency who opened with a revealing account of the German Emperor's excursion to Morocco in 1905. The sudden regrets of Imperial Majesty on hearing for the first time at Lisbon that the streets of Tangier were hardly adapted to driving, the horrible off-shore tossing which makes that port a bitter memory to landsmen, the Imperial charger almost declining on the quay to permit Majesty to mount in the unaccustomed disguise of a white helmet, compose an engaging picture. And memory, as politicians say, will not willingly let die the spectacle of Kühlmann climbing in-board on a rope ladder "covered with spray and in the full uniform of the Bamberg Uhlans." There is a queer scene at the Mansion House during an Imperial visit, in which Sir Edward Grey, sitting at table with his German colleague, was so struck by

the Emperor's peroration that "we promised one another, shaking hands warmly, to do all in our power to act in the spirit of the Kaiser's speech." The gesture, no doubt, is authentic; but one cannot help thinking that the initiative must have come from his more impulsive Continental neighbour. The harvest of diplomats is often remarkably light. But one is glad to have them; and once more, as one reads them, one falls back into admiration of the simple-minded romanticism of a generation which left statesmanship to statesmen, and lost ten millions of men in the process.

A COLONEL

It must be more than fifty years since the mocking voice of Mr. Matthew Arnold confounded the Victorians by ingeminating, as a sort of refrain in proof of the wretchedness of society, *Wragg is in custody*. The pert inconsequence of the trick has a certain schoolboy effectiveness, and there is something in its very rudeness, in its genteel adumbration of a " Come off it " or a " Garn," which must commend it to a less elegant later age.

One is singularly tempted to apply the method to a modern diarist whose brilliance combines in a remarkable degree the military wisdom of Clausewitz with the social ideals of Mr. Stephen McKenna. Colonel Repington introduces himself with the roguish intimation that his best things have " been omitted on the recommenda-

tion of eminent counsel"—happy counsel! —and proceeds to answer with unlimited gusto the old, old question as to what *he* did in the Great War. Being a soldier of recognized ability, he was not employed in any military capacity, but was retained in London to direct the operations on all fronts in the columns of the *Times*. His revelations are titillating; his daily appreciations of the slowly broadening, deepening, thickening, blackening situation are full of interest; but one feels that posterity and its historians will value his diary less for its revelations (they will know the facts) or for its judgments (they will know the truth) than for his contributions to the social history of England in war-time. He is perpetually lunching with a few people at the Ritz, dining with a few people at the Berkeley; he sees Lady Diana Manners's last appearance in her hospital clothes (they "suited her so well; she is very sad about it"); he hears "Lady Randolph in great form, and most bitter against Lord K."

One gets through it all the queer impression that one is watching an earthquake from a seat in a cabaret: the singers grimace and the flat piano tinkles as the great buildings go crashing down outside and the smoke goes up and the flames beneath it and the cries; but one can still hear the piano playing stale ragtime.

That is where Colonel Repington almost provokes one to set the war to a refrain in the manner of Mr. Matthew Arnold and his incarcerated Miss Wragg. A man pulled a Browning pistol on an Archduke, and Europe fell in on itself. *But Lady Milly was in splendid form.* Three nations reeled fighting across France and young men were taken in ships to die on beaches in Turkey; the lights of great cities were turned low, because the world was mad. *But Lady Milly was in splendid form.* Neuve Chapelle, Loos, Gallipoli, Kut, the Somme. *But Lady Milly.* . . . That is how it strikes one. Colonel Repington has unintentionally

etched his background with an acid that is more biting than his design. Because it is the acid of bitter truth.

This ingenuous diarist is perpetually taking us behind the scenes of the world's tragedy, and the visit to the *coulisses* is fascinating to the last degree. One sees the *coryphées* making up their dazzling appearance behind the footlights (" Winston gave me bits of the sort of remarks he would make on the points—very good and penetrating and clever, with some fine language. I was told that he has sat up until 4 a.m. with Garvin before his Navy speech. This accounts for the mess he made of it "). The scene-shifters mutter as they elbow their way by (" We discussed Max Aitken's peerage. Max had said he was sure there was something coming, for he had cut himself shaving in the morning and his blood had been blue "). And sometimes, as one stands with Colonel Repington in the wings, one can catch a word flung by a *diva* to her dresser which explains more than all her

divine *roulades:* "R."—Sir William Robertson—" says that L. G. wants a victory quickly, a victory while you wait. He does not care where. Somewhere where opinion will be impressed, like Damascus. R. has told him that Damascus may come in time, when rail and pipe lines are laid, and meantime what about Beersheba? L. G. didn't fancy that Beersheba would catch on, but Jerusalem might! This is War Cabinet strategy at the close of 1916, and if we can win on it we can win on anything." That is how they were talking behind the scenes and round the prompter's desk, while the poor simple souls packed in the crowded, darkened house in front were cheering and hoping and praying—and some of them even working and dying.

But the collection of anecdotes is as barren a business as the juxtaposition of amusing *bric-à-brac*, except when it illustrates the temper of our masters. There is a glimpse of Mr. Lloyd George that is well worth remembering:

"He asked me whether there was any single military book published before the war which I found worth reading. I said, 'The Book of Joshua and Clausewitz.' 'And Clausewitz is *only* principles,' added L. G."

The italic is not Mr. George's.

An atmosphere of broader farce is created by a conversation with Marshal Foch—until one remembers that he is not an honoured effigy in the War Museum but an active counsellor in the affairs of Europe:

"At the close of one day which I spent with him in 1914, he took me into his sanctum, and having shut the door, said, in a most impressive way, that there was one object upon which he sincerely desired my opinion. . . . I wondered what it could be. He took up a map of northern Europe, spread it out and asked me solemnly how much European territory we should expect for ourselves at the end of the war."

In a conversation with Francis I, with Frederick the Great or Napoleon this enquiry would have had its humour. But in the mouth of Marshal Foch it is too rich for laughter, because Marshal Foch is still alive. One does not wonder when he complains in 1919 : " President Wilson leads the Conference and does what he likes. I may not have my Rhine frontier because it is against Wilson's fine principles, and so when war comes again "—one admires the fine, downright certainty of it—" we shall have fine principles in place of a natural frontier." Observers had always suspected that Marshal Foch regarded the war as a simple episode in the history of France ; but the certainty is somehow a trifle disquieting.

On the impersonal side the diary is an equally valuable record of the war. The Colonel had rotated for years in what are called " well-informed circles," and he had written on military subjects with an intelligence to which they are rarely treated, so that one is not surprised

to find real insight in the thumb-nail appreciations of the changing situation which he entered in his journal. They show very clearly how the war looked, at every hour of it, from the angle of Whitehall. For Colonel Repington is pre-eminently a War Office soldier of the most brilliant type. That is perhaps why he finds little room for praise of Lord Kitchener.

His intimacy with the military *beau monde* enables one to get a unique glimpse at the temper of the British higher command. One is perpetually elbowed, as one follows him into the Holy of Holies, by a succession of genial gentlemen with nicknames. There is "Fatty" Wilson, and "Scatters" Wilson, and "Bockus" Nicol, and "Putty," and "Rawly." One seems to get the key-note of it all when the diarist adjures Sir William Robertson to "let Archie invade Palestine." It is quite a comfort when one remembers the uprooting of humbler persons to see the cosy *bonhomie* of high quarters. And Colonel Repington would

not change it for worlds, even when a casualty list showed that some thoroughly good fellow had not quite come up to the expectations of his friends : " I cannot get to hear yet whether there are any more generals who have been kicked out, besides X, Y, and Z. I hope there are no more : it is not at all satisfactory." And it was not.

There are moments when one wonders whether Colonel Repington was living in reality or in an early story by Mr. Kipling. Whole pages of his brilliant record are little more than cumulative evidence that the perspicacious Mr. Britling had seen through it when he grumbled about the military clique :

" The army had been a thing aloof, for a special end. It had developed all the characteristics of a caste. It had very high standards along the lines of its specialization, but it was inadaptable and conservative. Its exclusiveness was not so much a deliberate culture as a

consequence of its detached function. . . . It saw the great unofficial civilian world as something vague, something unsympathetic, something possibly antagonistic, which it comforted itself by snubbing when it dared and tricking when it could, something that projected members of Parliament towards it and was stingy about money."

Whilst Mr. Wells was writing that in 1916, Colonel Repington was restating it night after night in the social entries of his diary.

It is on the social side that his book will live, if posterity knows its business. One would give whole books of Polybius for one good picture of a little dinner at Carthage in the Second Punic War. The talk in the Saracen tents during the First Crusade, a political hostess's diary in the Hundred Years' War, Parisian gossip when the *Grande Armée* was in the field, these would be the original sources of true history for which no amount of dispatches,

documents pour servir, and military biographies are a substitute. Colonel Repington's diary will perform that inestimable service for the historian of the future. "The only visible signs of war," he wrote on a Sunday in 1917, "are that the men now wear usually short coats and black ties in the evenings, that dinners are shorter, and that servants are fewer and less good." Those corner tables at Claridge's, that charity matinée at the Alhambra, what the lovely lady said to the statesman, how the pretty widow looked in her weeds, these and these are the materials which Colonel Repington pours into the lap of history with the happiest disregard of solemnity, discretion —and the war.

MASTERS OF ARTS

THE English (it is one of their most engaging features) dearly love an amateur. Bitterly resenting all imputations of professionalism, they perpetually side with the Gentlemen against the Players, a conceivable explanation of their frequent disappointment at the sporting intelligence. History, which in less enlightened communities is frequently the work of historians, has become in England a recreation for retired statesmen. The German, with brutal directness, may leave philosophy to philosophers; but it is known to Englishmen as a dignified pastime for ex-Ministers. Town-planning, for which American universities train laborious experts, lies in Great Britain (it is the secret of her urban charm) at the mercy of any Indignant Ratepayer or Father of Ten who

chooses to employ his leisure in the composition of letters to the Press, stating with sufficient emphasis the case for a Processional Way punctuated with pylons and culminating in an efflorescence of serio-comic sculpture. And a public ear that is uniformly deaf to the trained utterance of professional writers will always thrill responsive to the voice of a poet-postman.

Everybody in England loves a part-timer. Indeed, there is a certain security in the feeling that the other part of his time may be quite intelligently employed. It is the essence of success, in a country which has applauded the politics of Lord Balfour and the mathematics of Lord Haldane, to appear (even if one cannot always be) an amateur. And the oddity of the national output, whether of legislation or of literature, is demonstrably due to the fact that it is mainly a by-product. Almost all the people who do anything in England have got something better to do. The tragedy is that they so rarely do it.

In such a country it is not surprising that the administrative problem presented by the war was immediately met by a search for public servants outside the ranks of regular administrators. That the nation's affairs should be directed at an awkward moment by the persons normally accustomed to direct them appeared, naturally enough, a solution of repellent banality; and the public service was promptly recruited by a series of the wildest and most delightful experiments. In the first stage an air of pleasing novelty was breathed into administrative life by the hurried transfer of military persons to all posts of civil importance. There was a hasty revival of the Cromwellian doctrine that a colonel is good enough for anything; and for a time this expedient sufficed to maintain that air of confusion which was requisite to bring the war, as they said, home. But as the colonels became habituated to their new surroundings, the tone of the service began to sink towards a dead level of efficiency; and

it became necessary to introduce new blood. This, by a magnificent stroke, was detected in the City; and since about that time it had become necessary for the State to protect itself against the operations of business men, the requirements of comedy were plainly to be met by enlisting its new protectors from the ranks of its latest enemies. The experiment was attended with the wildest success. The commercial community was rapidly transferred to those Departments which had been erected for its supervision, and collectivism was practised on an unprecedented scale by a large body of convinced individualists. The experiment of government by business men was carried still further; and names of commercial eminence began to appear in the starry elevation of the Cabinet, whilst the people of England sat back to enjoy the slow pantomime procession of the Supermen.

Like most scientific experiments, it was noisy but inconclusive; and towards the end of the

war it became necessary to provide the country with a new diversion. With a brilliant change of cast the comedians were varied, and the curtain rang up on the new experiment of government by Judges. Practitioners, deservedly eminent in their profession and arrived in due course at the finality of the Bench, found themselves set to the oddest and most unaccustomed tasks of administration, which they discharged with admirable patience and concluded with obvious relief. Of this experiment there can be no explanation beyond a frivolous desire on the part of the Executive to see the Judicature with its wigs off.

By this time the conductors of the war were threatened with an outbreak of peace; and it almost seemed as though by their previous experiments they had exhausted the possibilities of administrative charade. They had dressed colonels up as civil servants; they had disguised railway managers as statesmen; they had even (*proh pudor!*) stripped judges of their ermine.

There seemed little material left in the country for another *tableau vivant*; and in default the conduct of our foreign affairs across the green table at Paris and Versailles was in grave danger of remaining in the hands of those official persons who had been expensively trained to conduct them. But by one of those strokes of inspiration which distinguish the revue-producer from the mere statesman one last experiment was devised. An Associated Power, it seemed, had entrusted its government to a person of academic distinction. President Wilson should be confronted by the embattled dons of England.

The farce was produced on the largest and most magnificent scale. Scholars were recruited with an ardour which recalled the earlier operations of the police under the Military Service Acts. Hastily equipped for a life of gay diplomacy in jacket suits supplied at the public expense for Paris wear, they were set to the composition of brief but informing brochures

on countries which they had never visited. Fellows and Tutors followed Masters and Wardens overseas with something of the tragic, hurrying eagerness of the Children's Crusade; and once in Paris, they discharged their ridiculous duties with that solemnity which has never failed the older universities in a false position. England had need of them, and they took their place in the Hôtel Majestic as the last and most magnificent of the British amateurs.

Their service was well rewarded, as it deserved to be. Names once familiar on the slender backs of annotated texts (for schools) or on the broader labels of lexicons and atlases (for advanced students) began to creep into the mixed company of the Honours Lists. And on the night of Miss Zuleika Dobson's next visit to Oxford, when the Duke of Dorset puts on his Garter robes in his rooms in Broad Street and everyone else will appear wearing their full official distinctions, the polished tables of Senior Common Rooms will gleam with the

reflected radiance of British and Allied decorations. The Most Excellent Order will predominate. But there will be also the Legion of Honour and the Crown of Belgium ; nor will the White Eagle and St. Vladimir (with swords) be unrepresented.

The record of the Peace Conference is being written under our eyes, and a trifle hurriedly, by an eager rush of autobiographers. Even a distinguished member of the academic contingent so far succumbed to the confessional atmosphere bequeathed by Rousseau to the capital of the Third Republic as to publish, with a happy disregard of the Official Secrets Act and behind the impenetrable screen of economics, his intimate recollections of M. Clemenceau's gloves and the hasty mutterings of financial experts in the corners of committee-rooms. But the story, as is only proper, has been recorded in a more elaborate and academic form. A symposium of historians was gathered under the auspices of the Institute of International

Affairs, an impressive and somewhat exclusive body which seems a trifle inclined to keep all Europe for the private province of the Lords Robert Cecil and Eustace Percy, and is a little apt to adopt the irritating, furtive manner once assumed by Mr. Curtis and his masked knights of the Round Table for the secret federation of the British Empire and to adjust the world when it is not looking. A plan of collaboration was adopted under a Cambridge historian, which suggests that the busy spirit of the late Lord Acton still walks King's Parade; and publication was commenced of an impressive work designed to capture for posterity the elusive spirit of the Hôtel Majestic. The statement is all pitched a little in the tone of those anæmic and logical memoranda which are produced by official subordinates in order to embody the unanswerable reasons for the hasty and illogical decisions which their chiefs have already taken. But it is to be feared that the historians of the future, in their light-minded way, will want to

be told considerably more of how the men looked and talked and sounded who ended the war. One cannot imagine that a work compiled in the year 1821 on similar lines would be of great assistance to historians of the Peace of Vienna. What one wants from contemporaries is not their opinions or even their history but their *choses vues;* and that is precisely what these distinguished persons do not give us. They have made a gallant attempt at an impossible task, because one cannot write the history of 1919 in 1921. Their enterprise, since they are witnesses of real value, may be regretted, and one trusts that before their memories are overlaid with the *facetiæ* of post-war Common-Rooms, they will write down (for the wicked enjoyment of contemporaries and the instruction of posterity) what they really saw and did in the Great Peace. It will be easier to write, and it will certainly be easier to read.

SOME STRATEGISTS

It must be nearly thirty years since the late Captain Mahan stood silent on a peak in Darien in the first shock of the discovery that the waters of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans were wet. The thoughtful sailor indulged his companions of the United States Naval War College with the wild surmise that a liquid of this character might be expected to sustain the weight of warships and that the operations of such vessels would possess a distinct importance in determining the result of disputes between nations, always provided that they were not (as in the happy cases of Switzerland, Luxemburg, and Liechtenstein) entirely cut off from the sea. The leaping inferences of his discovery were communicated, through his English publisher,

to the inhabited world; and the doctrine of Sea Power became (if it ever needed to become) a commonplace. Yet there was a real merit in Mahan's work. It is easy to complain of him, as Wilde complained of a contemporary, that he pursued the obvious with the enthusiasm of a short-sighted detective; but it is even easier to forget that he produced an articulate and comprehensible statement of matters which had not, before he wrote, been stated at all. Sea Power had been for several centuries the practice of the British Navy, and the British Navy, by reason of certain faults in its upbringing and the difficulties of literary composition on a mobile surface, is not given to self-expression. Before the year 1880 there existed hardly a single statement of the broad principles of naval strategy, and even now there are extraordinarily few. Portsmouth has never produced the counterpart of those admirable, if unbound, little volumes of professional prose which French soldiers used to publish at Nancy;

and since the *Grande muette* has declined to explain its fundamental principles, one is grateful to the enterprising American who undertook the work. There are no surprises in his revelation, and the air of discovery is sometimes a trifle irritating; the constant treatment of Venus as a new planet would damn any astronomer, and no one could bear many walks with a man who insisted regularly on striking across Primrose Hill as an undiscovered watershed.

But if Mahan discovered nothing in particular, he discovered it very well. One feels the need of his expository method whenever a large and obvious fact emerges into the area of military science without an adequate statement of its elements. That is precisely what has just occurred in the case of railways. We all know a railway when we see one; and we can all grasp, if we can read a newspaper, what railways mean in modern war. It is obvious beyond the faintest hope of novelty that European warfare, as

it was practised on the French and Polish frontiers, was a struggle for railways conducted by men at the end of railways who would be reduced to fisticuffs in a week and to starvation in a fortnight if their railways could be paralysed. But so far as broad and popular exposition in general terms is concerned, the military science of railways is a subject as uncharted as Lake Chad when our fathers went to school. It is a white patch on the map that cries out for the explanatory longitude, the illuminating platitude, of the American sea-captain. Wanted, one cries, wanted a Mahan.

It was Mr. H. G. Wells who insisted, long before they took the horse omnibuses off the road, that the world would be transformed by its means of communication. The change was one of those queer, unconscious achievements of the Nineteenth Century, when little men in black coats produced the most astonishing results whilst thinking hard all the time about something else. It began in the year 1830,

when a British regiment was trundled thirty-four miles in two hours over the far from permanent way of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway. Then, like most things in the progress of Europe, having been done by an Englishman, it was explained by a German. A Westphalian bearing the honoured, if slightly misspelt, name of Harkort startled his Landtag with railway projects and produced a pamphlet on the military value of a line between Minden and Cologne. His heated imagination played recklessly round the prospect :

" Let us suppose that we had a railway and a telegraph line on the right bank of the Rhine from Mainz to Wesel. Any crossing of the Rhine by the French would then scarcely be possible, since we should be able to bring a strong defensive force on the spot before the attempt could be developed.

" These things may appear very strange today ; yet in the womb of the future there

slumbers the seed of great developments in railways, the results of which it is as yet quite beyond our power to foresee."

It was the year 1833, and the German public was promptly informed by one distinguished soldier that infantry would arrive sooner if they marched, whilst another added that the conveyance of cavalry and artillery by train would be a sheer impossibility. Meanwhile the War Office produced in 1846 a "Regulation relative to the Conveyance of Her Majesty's Forces, their Baggage and Stores, by Rail," and Belgium gave the Continent a lead in railway construction. The military advantages of a railway system were repeatedly emphasized in admirable prose by the subjects of Louis Philippe; and there was some interesting early work in Central Europe. The Prussians moved 12,000 men over two lines in 1846; a Russian army corps entrained in 1849 and moved into Austrian territory to suppress the revolution in

Moravia; and the Austrians took 75,000 men, 8,000 horses, and 1,000 wagons from the Danube to the Silesian frontier in that movement of troops which resulted in the humiliation of Prussia at Olmütz and sixteen years of smouldering resentment that found expression at Königgrätz.

Railways entered the repertory of European warfare too late to be used by Napoleon or to be more than tried by von Moltke. With a single line from Paris to Vienna the Emperor might have conquered Europe in two months instead of in two years, and a railway system would have multiplied the *Grande Armée* to hold off the Russians in the Grand Duchy of Warsaw whilst the English in the Peninsula were driven into the sea. The first European war to be conducted after the construction of railways was the campaign of Magenta and Solferino. Napoleon III took a French army into Italy and, after making considerable use of the railway between Paris and various stations on the

south coast and on the Italian frontier, he ignored its existence with heroic completeness in an attempt to conduct his operations on orthodox Napoleonic lines. Von Moltke's papers, in which the design against Austria was progressively developed in the years between 1860 and 1866, are a mine of various wisdom upon the political and military conformation of Europe; but there is no adequate treatment of railways. In the campaign of 1866, which saw the entry of the field telegraph, the Prussians made no brilliant use of their own and the Saxon systems, but there was a sensational employment of railways on the Italian frontier; the Austrian commanders were scandalized by the repeated appearance of hostile troops in numbers quite unrecognized by the rules, and a French military writer was inspired to lyrical comment on the subject in the *Spectateur Militaire* for September, 1869. Nine months later his country was invaded by the armies of the North German Confederation and its

allies after an excellent concentration by railway in the Palatinate.

But the real impetus to the development and to the progress of so many branches of modern warfare came from the American Civil War. The earnest and irritable men who conducted the somewhat tangential operations of the Union armies were confronted by every problem of the military use of railways. The supply of troops by rail-borne commissariat, the destruction of railways (which has always been a distinctively American, though latterly an almost exclusively Mexican, accomplishment), and the organization of railway services by technical troops all emerged from the long conflict. McCallum was the first of the railway soldiers, and the troubles of his subordinates with the military element are illustrated by an appealing telegram of the War Department:

"Be patient as possible with the Generals.

Some of them will trouble you more than they will the enemy."

Africa was introduced to the military railway by Lord Kitchener's conquest of the Soudan by rail; and in Asia the Trans-Siberian Railway was the instrument with which Russia conducted her astonishing defensive in Manchuria at the end of a single line.

The late war, which began with a German move along the ordinary route of the Paris-Berlin expresses and degenerated in eight weeks into a scramble for the railway junctions of Northern France, was conducted with railways and for railways. The German defensive on the eastern front consisted merely of movements round the parallel lines of the German railway-citadel, and the offensive of 1915 was solely a lunge at the railway system of Poland. Without railways the war would have ended in the suburbs of Berlin in six weeks. It was the railway, and the railway alone, that made pos-

sible the vast and paralysed armies that lay helplessly opposite to each other across Europe, breathing heavily, eating what their railways brought them, and shooting away what their railways could carry of the national accumulations of metal goods.

It was in the Great War the hand that ruled the railway rocked the world. There was no romance in it. We have learnt in bitterness that the glory of war is the wretchedness of its most broken man, and the dignity of war is the vulgarity of its basest recruiting-poster. The call of Mr. Kipling's red gods dwindled to Mr. Tennant's sartorial enquiry whether our best boy was in khaki; and as the young men marched away, our ideals faded until we were left alone with those less disinterested men of business in whose hearts Mr. Asquith's burning words will always find an echo: "No price," as the contractor said, "can be too high when honour and freedom are at stake."

Warfare had been invested by Victorian

romance with a certain glamour. It was generally believed that the saviours of their country would leave for the railway-station in scenes of mild but appropriate emotion, returning after a short interval victorious and bronzed to the proper tint of brown, which is familiar to all playgoers as the unfailing indication of successful military service. But in the autumn of 1914 we were thrust suddenly into reality; it was an experience which the people of Europe are not likely to forget. In absolute silence and without a single aid to the heroic imagination men went into the first campaign of the European War. If they expected it to be autumn manœuvres with ball-cartridge, they were bitterly surprised. Moving with the secrecy of criminals, men killed one another with machines; at the orders of their Governments, which had for many years laboriously discouraged crime, they committed murder, burglary, and rape. The method of European warfare was exposed once and for all. It had

been familiar to the Middle Ages as an aristocratic celebration of the harvest festival, and it had been permitted to survive in modern times as a form of international argument, as the ultimate form of controversy in the European family: a nation went to war when its foreign relations became impossible. In the area of actual warfare, it varied between heroic mud-larking and the abomination of desolation; and outside in Europe it presented itself as an enormous and unfascinating blend of a bank failure and a railway accident. That is a European war.

SOME FRENCHMEN

It was the discovery of Laurence Sterne in the year 1767 that they order this matter better in France. Since the throne of St. Louis was occupied at the moment by Louis XV, the remark was probably inapplicable to anything except furniture and dance-music. But the reverend gentleman having omitted to state to which of those absorbing branches of human activity his comment was addressed, it has been appropriated since his lamented death by the whole heavenly host of critics and applied by them to every achievement of the mind of man from a rational system of registering heavy luggage to the more laborious businesses of poetic drama and the manufacture of field artillery. The observation has become one of the most golden items in our national treasury of

misquotations; and perhaps it may serve as a convenient summary of that general appreciation of French effort which became common in the United Kingdom after Lord Lansdowne had inaugurated the *Entente Cordiale* of 1904.

For six centuries the Englishman had regarded his cross-Channel neighbours with that settled and gloomy disgust which is congenial to his simple nature. Their manufactures were usually designated as kickshaws; their diet was believed to consist exclusively of the lesser molluscs and reptilians; and they wore the most preposterous hats. It was never known for certain, but it was darkly whispered, that they killed foxes with the bullet rather than with the dog; and their language was apparently composed of what Mr. Kipling has elegantly described as *doodeladays*. But this genial view, which had held the field since the reign of Edward III, was exorcised in less than six months in the reign of Edward VII by a diplomatic arrangement relating to some fisheries off

Newfoundland and some rookeries in North Africa. It was discovered in this country, as the Egyptian question disappeared from the contested area of international politics, that the Frenchman Had Points. He was observed, after all, to be a solid fellow with many of the Anglo-Saxon virtues. Mr. Imré Kiralfy gave an eloquent expression to the idea by making a nightmare in stucco out of a goods-yard in Shepherd's Bush. The *Entente* found a suburb plaster and left it plaster of Paris; and the people of England began to learn French.

From such small beginnings the French movement in these islands grew to imposing proportions; and when the outbreak of war found Great Britain ranged alongside of France, British opinion was prepared for a generous appreciation of its ally. The organized endeavour of a Latin race became the model of English statesmanship; and to the profound surprise of some of us, who had been preaching it *in partibus infidelium* for a decade, the re-

covery of Alsace-Lorraine was promoted to be an object of national anxiety. The loyalty of the *Tailor and Cutter* to its allies survived the yachting-cap which M. Poincaré wore with knickerbockers during a memorable visit to the Western Front; and the superiority of the French artillery, which one had suspected when Bombardier Wells succumbed to Carpentier in the weeks preceding the war, became a commonplace of military criticism. In fine, France and all her works were very properly received with a strong and sudden gust of acclamation, which would inevitably remind Mr. Chesterton of nothing so much as trumpets. This revolution was even more sweeping than that introduced about the same time in artistic perspective by M. Mestrovic, when that eminent Serb, adopting the somewhat colloquial interpretation of a bust as being something which from all appearances has burst, provoked the more conservative elements in English criticism to express a fervent hope that Britons never will be Slavs.

This temper of appreciation of France was, like all belated praise, somewhat uncritical; its compliments were all sincere and nearly all deserved, but it was sometimes a trifle undiscerning. France is (and had been before the fact was noticed in the London newspapers) the most civilized country in Europe. If the intelligent man of any period wished to know what Europe would be like in fifty years' time, he had only to look at the France of his day. But it is, perhaps, a misfortune that one had to go to war with the Germans in order to discover a platitude about the French.

By a stroke of delicious irony Mr. Kipling also was among the prophets. It is a fact of almost international significance that the high-priest of the Anglo-Saxon race brought himself to swing a censer before the Goddess of Reason, and it should be said for praise that he swung it very gracefully. Mr. Kipling, who had risen to a position of more than laureated eminence by the possession of an Imperial Eye and the

use of the word "gadgets," discovered the French. It should be said, in fairness to that intelligent people, that it is some considerable time since the French discovered Mr. Kipling. His notes on the French Army were put together in a pamphlet, and his skilled observation combined with an exact and bitter appreciation of the nature of war to produce something more and better than mere war-correspondence. It is characteristic that his chief regret during a visit to the Western Front was an ignorance of French slang, which debarred him from any grasp of current military "shop." Mr. Kipling has always counted among his gifts a genius for admiration. Sometimes he has admired things that are not admirable; but when this power was directed, as in the present case, upon a worthy object, the result was entirely satisfactory. The French people at war was admired in a manner in which Mr. Belloc, if he had not been otherwise engaged, might have admired it:

"It is a people possessed of the precedent and tradition of war for existence, accustomed to hard living and hard labour, sanely economical by temperament, logical by training, and illuminated and transfigured by their resolve and endurance."

That is a tone of self-respecting friendship which is infinitely preferable to the rather shrill invective with which the contemporary Mr. Kipling excoriated the Hun. Talk about "animals" and "the Beast" reminded one inevitably that no military damage is done by "killing Kruger with your mouth." His visit to the Vosges was crowded with the detail of mountain warfare; and he drew with a loving and familiar pen "the same observation-post table-map, observer, and telephonist; the same always-hidden, always-ready guns; and the same vexed foreshore of trenches smoking and shaking, from Switzerland to the sea." But his generous appreciation of the French was

marred by one singular error. Mr. Kipling reconciled his present praise with his past neglect of the French by a rather questionable theory that the war changed their psychology; and in order to emphasize this transformation he exaggerated their ruthlessness, until he has almost come to credit his allies with the worst qualities of their enemy. It is ungracious, when he is portraying Marianne, merely to hold the mirror up to Nietzsche; and it is almost disloyal, when he is describing the French temper, to talk Boche

The true temper of the French is more easily discoverable in a view of the whole record of France than in a sketch, however expert and however intimate, of the French trenches. The Third Republic at war was an inspiring spectacle of logical and organized democracy, but the explanation of its qualities is to be sought rather in the past than in the present. The tone of the French armies was derived less from the foundling Constitution of 1875, which his-

tory has fathered upon M. Wallon, than from the great days of the Monarchy, the First Republic, and the First Empire. That tone has been tempered by France's loss of her illusions. There was no appetite in those days of effort for *gloire*, the gadfly of all mad policies, because it had been discovered in 1815 that armies which march into Berlin and Moscow and Vienna merely provoke other armies to march into Lille and Nancy and Paris. There is little taste for Cæsarism and hero-worship, because, as M. Hanotaux has written, France is cured of individuals and Utopias. The French are a modern people; and the spectacle of a modern people at war is only less splendid than the spectacle of a modern people at peace. But the more modern a people is, the more closely and clearly does it derive from its ancestors. That is why the study of French history is essential to any man who wishes to understand French politics.

The English, who are rarely diffident in

writing upon their neighbours, have attempted with singular rarity to write the story of France. The First Empire, of whose *bric-à-brac* they are passionate collectors, has produced nothing among them beyond a mediocre biography; and the remainder of French history has been treated as a somewhat barren field peopled only by the Scottish Jacobins of Thomas Carlyle and several historical characters of sinister appearance impersonated by the late Sir Henry Irving. It is unfortunate; because just as the history of Italy is the history of European art and the history of England is the history of European expansion, so the history of France is in the fullest sense the history of European policy. Every movement which has resulted in the transformation of European states has radiated from or converged upon the city of Paris: even a British diplomat knows French.

The French line from Arras to the Alsatian pine-trees was a long scroll upon which the whole of French history was written. There

was the thrifty statecraft which had added one field to another until the lord of Paris became the King of France ; the slow effort of the lunge which drove the French frontier nearer and nearer to the Rhine ; and the splendid makeshifts, as Victor Hugo called them, of the Revolution, which swept the kings over the border and the flag of the Republic after them. France is no novice at the game of European war ; it is a long story, which begins in anthropology and ends with the White Paper of Sir Edward Grey.

There was once a British historian of the French whose facts were accurate and well-arranged, his military (and especially his Napoleonic) history intelligible, and his manner as detached as a proletarian shirt-cuff. But he succumbed to an astonishing assertion about the Frenchman's " lack of historical sense," in a country where every candidate for Parliament can talk for days about the *principes de 1789*, and will on the smallest provocation describe

his adversary as a *patriote An II.* or a *vieille barbe de 1848*. One can hardly imagine an Englishman taunting a reactionary with the fate of Monmouth's army at Sedgemoor; but the French democrat will tell him about the *armée de Condé* as soon as look at him. One might as well rebuke an Ulsterman for his ignorance of the public career of William III.

A more serious fault in the average French history is that it generally ends in the year 1871. After an admirably balanced narrative, in which one sees the characters of the present scene assembling in the wings, the historian rings down the curtain at the Treaty of Frankfort. Now the history of France, unlike the *History of France*, does not leave off in 1871. *Vixere fortes post Agamemnona*, as Horace almost said. Although the public appearances of M. Grévy were less impressive than the epiphany of Napoleon, the Third Republic is far more important to all of us than the First Empire. To leave one's knowledge of France with the

provisional Presidency of M. Thiers is to produce a completely false impression. It may be unattractive for the historian to descend from the windy heights of Napoleonic diplomacy to the *mares stagnantes* of Parliamentary history. There is something unheroic about the *dictature de M. Joseph Prudhomme*; and politicians with the appearance of head-waiters are dull company, even if they speak with the tongues of angels. Yet it remains true that our allies were not lit on their way to war by their blazing torches of the Revolution or the flaring gas-jets of the Second Empire; but they chose their path with foresight and they walked it with caution under the mild light of the *République athénienne*. The history of the Third Republic is the last and most vital chapter in the history of France. The curious thing about history is that it really happened: some of it is happening now.

SOME MORE FRENCHMEN

An Englishman is a man who lives on an island in the North Sea governed by Scotsmen : that is why it is called self-governing. His occupations are simple, but absorbing. In the intervals of earning money he practises (or preaches) the family virtues, reads (for the duration of the war) twenty-five newspapers in the week, and regards his weather, his relations, and his Government with a settled disgust. As the result, possibly, of an indifferent climate he is a person of somewhat slow perception. With regard to persons of importance he makes it a rule never to notice them until they are dead ; and with regard to countries his practice is, thanks to his classical education, much the same.

Thus in the Eighteenth Century any gentleman could tell you all about the Greek Republics

and the Roman Empire; but nobody in England, except Edmund Burke and the Earl of Chatham, was aware of the existence of its thirteen North American colonies, until they very pardonably revolted in order to remind the Englishman that they were still where he had put them. He had not noticed in the Nineteenth Century that he possessed a considerable Empire overseas, until the fact was discovered for him by Lord Beaconsfield and emphasized by Mr. Chamberlain. And, so recently as August 1914, he made the startling discovery that he lived next door to Europe. It may be that, as we discovered the British Empire in the last century, so in the Twentieth Century we shall discover Europe. In this age of science all things are possible.

To the Englishman his island is a piece of land entirely surrounded by foreigners. The majority of these people are believed to live in a continent lying off the mouth of the Thames and known as Europe. Certain parts of it, as for example the Swiss mountains, the French

Riviera, and the Italian picture galleries, are reserved for the holidays of Englishmen; but the remainder is entirely given up to foreigners. These foreigners, it has been observed by Englishmen who have ventured among them, differ in degree but not in kind. They are marked in every instance by an obstinate refusal to converse in English. This unreasonable objection compels the Englishman to toy lightly (or painfully) with the various absurd languages which they use among themselves.

Before the war the Englishman recognized several distinct species of foreigners. There were the Germans, a peaceful people devoted to music, philosophy, and wood carving, who were reported recently to have directed their energies into the path of commerce; these could be distinguished by an inability to pronounce the letter "w" and the universal wearing of spectacles. Then there was the dark-haired foreigner of the Mediterranean. If he was playing the guitar, fighting bulls, or

asleep, you knew him for a Spaniard; but if he divided his time between the tenor parts in opera and the precarious art of eating macaroni, he was an Italian. Then there was the Russian, whom you could always tell by his knout, his fur hat, and the cigar-cases which were apparently attached to the outside of his clothes. But, above all, there was the Frenchman, who was the foreigner *par excellence*.

Five centuries of Anglo-French hostility had gone to the making of our imaginary Frenchman before the Lansdowne Convention of 1904 ended him once and for all. He was a magnificent creature. Because in the Eighteenth Century beef-eating England fought France for the control of India and North America and noticed that its enemy was a trifle unorthodox in his *hors d'œuvres*, we were all brought up to believe that Frenchmen lived exclusively upon frogs. And because at the end of that century France crusaded against Europe in the high name of the French Revolution, every Englishman was

given to understand that every Frenchman was a gesticulating jackanapes with a farcical falsetto. The generation of the late Prince Albert regarded the generation of Napoleon III as a shocking blend of Popery and the gay life ; and because the sporting England of Queen Victoria could never understand the unathletic France of President Thiers, we have all in our time conjured up delightful visions of legions of little Frenchmen in flat-brimmed silk hats going fox-shooting with packs of poodles. No picture of life in Calais was too ludicrous to be believed in Dover : that is one of the advantages of being an Island Race.

It is almost impossible to analyse the causes of such national mistakes ; when a whole race goes wrong, it is not simple to find the first blunder. After all, nobody ever did understand his neighbours : one misinterprets the proceedings of the man next door simply because he is the man next door.

England was at fault in its reading of France,

because from 1360 until 1904 it regarded France with the eyes of an enemy. This hostility was interrupted by an interval in the reign of Elizabeth, a second interval in the reign of Charles II, and a third interval under the government of Walpole. But in the main it is true to say that England and France had been enemies from the reign of Edward III to the reign of Edward VII. There were periods when the exigencies of foreign policy dictated an *entente*, and diplomacy did its best to unite the two countries; but it was a friendship of governments, and the individual Englishman was never the friend of the individual Frenchman. Now you never understand your enemy: possibly that is why he is your enemy.

But it must not be thought that England alone was guilty of errors of this type. France in its time has misread England almost as completely as England has misread France. It is probably untrue that on this island we travel through a darkness of perpetual fogs to buy our

wives by public auction at Smithfield. But until ten years ago these stimulating facts as to our climate and habits were articles of faith with Frenchmen of intelligence; that is the French error about England. It was equally untrue that France had lived for the past forty years so entirely in the nightmare memory of the *Année Terrible* that French politicians would resent no insult and French soldiers could resist no onset; that was the German error about France.

The British error about France came from two causes: a failure to appreciate the truth about French history and an inability to observe the truth about the France that is living under our eyes. When British opinion is set right about the past of France, it will be in a position to see straight about its present. But until it can get both of these things into a true perspective, it will continue to make itself ridiculous whenever it thinks of a Frenchman.

The first fallacy about the French is that they

are frivolous. This illusion takes two forms, each of which is extremely popular in England : a belief that the French are light-headed in their public life and light-minded in their private life. Now the whole error with regard to French politics is probably derived from a misreading of the French Revolution. That group of events, which is generally believed to have consisted of an impulsive attack upon the Bastille, followed by an orgy of promiscuous decapitation, was in reality a solemn and progressive movement by which the society and government of France were reconstructed from top to bottom. It resulted from the accident that the reformers began at the top that they were compelled to cut off heads ; but the Revolution itself was an effort of the whole population, directed by men of the professional class, against a discredited system of government and aristocratic privilege. The solemnity of the Revolution was consistent with the complete seriousness of the nation which had pro-

duced the Huguenots and was yet to produce the Third Republic.

The Third Republic, by which France has been governed since 1870, is the most serious government in Europe. It is no evidence of light-mindedness that Frenchmen have occasionally demonstrated their sincere preference for the republican form of government by dying for it on barricades. There is nothing flippant about street-fighting; and Tennyson was never farther from intelligence than when he delighted the subjects of Queen Victoria by a reference to "The red fool-fury of the Seine." It is true that in the beginning and middle of the last century Frenchmen showed a general uncertainty as to the precise form of government which they proposed to retain. But for fifty years they have retained the Republic.

The French Republic has no meretricious attractions. Its army has no dress uniform except the uniform in which it fights; its waiters (and even its head-waiters) wear the

same clothes as its politicians (and even its President); and the *corps d'élite*, which had been the military pride of the Second Empire, were abolished in the first military reorganization of the Republic. France, which the good Englishman believes to live perpetual French farces as it revolves riotously round "Gay Paree," is the most serious country west of China. Its Trade Unionism is fifty years ahead of the rest of Europe; its inventors showed us the way to the motor-car, the aeroplane, and the submarine; and its genius is for the organization of peace. But its army was the most modern and the most silent fighting force on the Continent. One found in the little fortress-towns of Eastern France little taste for the old shows of war. In the streets every man was a soldier, because one had to have soldiers; and in the country every hill top was a gun-platform, because one had to have guns. That is the military temper of modern France; it does not set much store by glory, and it has changed

so much since its armies swept light-heartedly out into Europe on the first wave of the Revolution. Because France is civilized and because it is rich, France is a peaceful country, and when a country fights for peace it makes war with a hope that wins battles.

Modern France is neither a drill-ground nor a play-ground. It is a great economic State alive with the enterprise which has built up the industries of its north and the agriculture of its centre, veined closely with lines of railway and canal, and playing a leading part in the commercial life of Europe That is the France which Englishmen discovered with a shock of surprise in the hot weather of 1914. It is a discovery which will affect more than a single war or a single generation, because geography has made the co-operation of England and France in Western Europe as natural and inevitable as the co-operation of Germany and Austria in Central Europe. The discovery of France was something more than a discovery of an ally

against Germany; it was the discovery of a neighbour whom England had not known for six centuries and by whom England will live in an exchange of all that is most valuable in both countries for more than the time of any man now living.

SOME GERMANS

War, in the considered judgment of the late General Sherman, is Hell. The comparison, although it begs an exciting question of teleology, is vivid and, it would seem, just. There are the outcries and the fire and even, in those countries which enjoy the blessings of Parliamentary institutions, the worm. But it is nowhere suggested, either in sacred or profane revelation, that the damned are provided with appropriate reading matter. Now when a miscalculation of the Great General Staff as to the train service between Liège and Paris sentenced the continent of Europe to a trial by ordeal, there was added to the physical torture of war the intellectual torture of books about it. Soldiers, sailors, travellers, and even dons and governesses hastened to adapt the peaceful

art of stenography to the grim uses of war, and brought it, as they say, home to those suffering non-combatants who were physically unfit to run, but were unfortunately still able to read. Literary men did their Bit with the mechanical regularity of a child saying its Piece ; and the cockpit of Europe re-echoed with the sound of innumerable writers murmuring contentedly, "Kiss me, Bernhardi : at least I have done my duty."

Other wars had seemed tolerable to the belligerents, because they were happily ignorant as to what they were fighting about. In those days it was satisfying to die for those princes of Europe who were said by a philosopher to "amuse their own leisure and exercise the courage of their subjects in the practice of the military art." But a war of ideas is about as entertaining as a drama of ideas. It is unnatural to expect a man to enjoy fighting with a carillon of explanation ringing in his ears and indicating precisely why, how, where, and with

whom he is desired to contend. One is not stimulated to fight with beasts at Ephesus by the gift of a Natural History and a short guide to the neighbourhood; and it was even less reasonable to expect a footman to turn into a foot-soldier because he had read three Lives of Frederick the Great, *The Love Letters of Helmuth von Moltke*, and a colour-book about Potsdam. It was perfectly proper that the people of England should acquire elementary information on the subject of Germany, whether they were fighting it or not; but it was a trifle undignified to make a European war the excuse for a gigantic course of University Extension.

One is unwilling to believe that the Roman parent in the Punic Wars was asked to purchase *The Confessions of Hasdrubal*, or *Hamilcar and the Women He Loved;* and it was improbable that *The Real Joan of Arc* would have found an extensive sale among the bewildered subjects of Henry VI. When Xenophon walked from Baghdad to the Black Sea, no Athenian book-

seller issued *The First Ten Thousand;* and whilst Garibaldi was conquering Calabria in a four-wheeler, the Neapolitans were undisturbed by works upon Lord Brougham and his contributions to contemporary traction. But in the past five years these things have been paralleled and multiplied beyond measure, until the war is almost invisible under its own bibliography. The frightfulness of General von Bissing was as nothing to that of the average English book about his country. The catalogue of German wars has been written down in a manner that recalls the irreverent comment of Gibbon upon one of his authorities: "The coarse and undistinguishing pencil of Ammianus had delineated his bloody figures with tedious and disgusting accuracy." One may well regret, now that the autumn of our publishing season has deepened into the winter of our discontent, that so many persons should have so little to say about Prussia beyond what is either trite or Treitschke.

SOME GERMANS

Literary critics have sometimes attempted to derive comfort from the saying of Lewis Carroll that "the number of lunatic books is as finite as the number of lunatics"; and it would be consoling if one could believe that the supply of books on Prussia is commensurate with the rapidly diminishing supply of Prussians. But in default of this happy arrangement, and failing a rational censorship of all matter calculated to amuse the enemy, our only hope seems to rest in the production of a definitive work which shall exhaust the subject without exhausting its readers. From this point of view the University of Oxford, which combines the study of history with the practice of politics, appears to have done all that is required of it. Two of the most popular lecturers in the School of Modern History, whose collaboration was a pleasing symptom of the party truce, produced a book which queered once and for all the Prussian pitch. There is no excuse, after the combined labours of Messrs. Marriott

and Grant Robertson, for a continuance of the Saturnalia of dancing nonsense that has reeled round the makers of Prussia, since the finished article committed the supreme indiscretion of taking the first line of the chorus of the Jingo song literally. One cannot read this quiet and creditable piece of academic history and turn back again to the inaccurate melodrama of its competitors. The Prussian tradition was not strikingly interesting or (to the foreigner) particularly inspiring; but it was, for what that is worth, the tradition of the enemy. It is at least true to say that the last war is almost the first of English wars in which it has been safe for Englishmen to study the other side. For if the subjects of George III had known as much about the French Revolution as the subjects of George V have lately learnt about Prussia, the Great War would have come to an unfortunate and sudden end in the hard winter of 1794.

The successive phases of Prussian history

have grown to be almost painfully familiar. One begins with an acid comment on the indifferent and unlovely quality of the North German plain ; and one is apt to forget, as that blasted heath comes to appear the natural haunt of the witches of military brutality and political craft, that Niccolo Macchiavelli enjoyed the amenities of the Arno. In any case European issues are not decided by questions of subsoil and top-dressing ; and it may be that the unfriendliness of Nature has supplied Prussia with that mass of stubborn yokels which was the chief reservoir of its man-power. One passes direct by a pardonable transition, which omits the mosaic of mediæval Germany, to the age of Frederick the Great ; and one castigates with appropriate severity his Silesian and Polish transactions. It is usual to fix the making of Prussia in this eventful reign and by a pleasing symmetry to juxtapose the *incipium Borussiæ* with the *finis Poloniæ*. The Nineteenth Century of Prussian history is more

varied. One opens with the collapse and resurrection of the kingdom in face of the French between the battle of Jena and the battle of Leipzig, and before the inexplicable coma of Prussia in the years between 1815 and 1848. One is then at liberty to study at full length the Prussianization of Germany by war, *Zollverein*, and treaty. That process is probably the most significant fact in modern Germany, which is now, as the Emperor William I remarked, "an extended Prussia." But it was preceded by a process which is of almost equal importance, but is commonly treated with absolute neglect. The Prussianization of Germany was merely the inevitable consequence of the Prussianization of Prussia; and that process was the work of a forgotten king, who has earned a seat among the Tartaric "Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers," of the Prussian hierarchy from which neither Frederick nor Bismarck nor General von Bernhardi himself should displace him. Frederick

William I, from whose singularly empty head Prussia sprang fully armed, has hardly made that noise in the world which he deserves. It is significant that even so careful a study as that of Messrs. Marriott and Grant Robertson devotes fifty pages to the achievement of Frederick the Great and barely ten to the work of Frederick William, which alone made it possible. Although Mr. Marriott (or Mr. Grant Robertson) admits that his reign was "the period in which all the most unlovely and forbidding qualities of Prussianism were scourged into the kingdom," Mr. Grant Robertson (or Mr. Marriott) is permitted to remark that "two such kings as Frederick William I, and Prussia would have ceased to contribute to the world anything but the ethics of Bridewell and the lessons of the guard-room": the comment recalls the writing of Macaulay alike by its eloquence and by its inaccuracy. The fascination of invective has tempted too many writers to forget that Frederick William made Prussia.

He was followed by Frederick the Great as inevitably as Philip of Macedon was followed by Alexander. As Philip created the phalanx, so Frederick William created the Prussian infantry. His collection of giant grenadiers expressed a grotesque taste for human *bric-à-brac*, and his *grands soldats de parade avec leurs petits habits bleus et leurs cheveux poudrés à blanc* entertained his contemporaries ; but they failed singularly to amuse the next generation in the course of the Seven Years' War. He created the Prussian army, and even gave to it a national character by assigning to every regiment a Prussian recruiting district, from which two-thirds of its strength were drawn : the conception was remarkable at a time when every European army was a force of paid (and often imported) pugilists. On the side of civil administration Frederick William created the centralized executive of the Prussian monarchy and baptized it with the strikingly national title of *General - Ober - Finanz - Kriegs - und -*

Domainen-Directorium. His remarkable blend of languages and metaphors ("*Ich stabilire die Souveraineté wie einen Rocher von Bronce*") concealed a great truth; in the army and the civil service Frederick William had made the two wheels of the Prussian machine. He Prussianized Prussia; and it seems almost time that somebody called him a Hun.

The Prussianization of Germany was a far simpler, if more gradual, process which filled the later half of the Nineteenth Century. But its earlier years are occupied by a curious business which almost, but not quite, succeeded in producing the Germanization of Prussia. Between 1815 and 1848 the militant agriculturists of Brandenburg were very nearly re-absorbed in that German family whose natural occupations are the carving of wood and the composition of music. Under Frederick William IV, who almost justified *Punch's* accusations of habitual intemperance by his persistent attachment to the mediæval ideal, the Prussian almost

became a mild-eyed German rustic. But the Liberal revolution of 1848 put an intolerable strain upon the *Junker;* and the generous fever was succeeded by the cold fit of Manteuffel, until Bismarck restored to Prussia the normal circulation of its blood and iron. The historians of Prussia have amused their leisure by selecting certain figures as typical of that kingdom. One of the most popular for this purpose is Frederick the Great, who is constantly decorated with a distinction which he would have resented as an insult. But that cosmopolitan was the man of his century rather than of his country; he was equally typical of France, of Austria, of Spain, or even of England, because, in fact, he was only typical of the year 1760. There is a modern belief that the qualities of efficiency and organization are in some way Prussian; and the attempt has been made to sum up the North German character in the accomplishments of its commercial magnates. But the powers of industrial organization in time of war, which

should have earned for the ingenious Herr Ballin the title of the North German Lloyd George, are hardly inherited from the Great Elector, and the praise of them should be attributed to a somewhat older race. The truth is that the business man is not a national type; Herr von Gwinner's attachment is not to the Old Mark, but to the new *mark*. Commercial aptitude is not an inherited, but an acquired characteristic; and its inclinations are as cosmopolitan as those of Mr. Henry Ford, whose attempted gift of what Lord Beaconsfield must have called "Peace with Rubber" intrigued the world from Kirkwall to Para. There is only one Prussian type, and he is called Bismarck.

The history of Prussia is the history of its successes; but there is perhaps more instruction to be derived from the record of its failures. It cannot colonize in hot climates: yet it seeks an empire overseas. It cannot govern subject races without alienating them as far asunder

as the Poles: yet it seeks to revise its frontiers within Europe. It cannot manipulate a modern constitution: yet it claims that the advance of its frontier-stones is the march of civilization. It is a claim that must be denied.

SOME ROMANS

THERE is an admirable, if neglected, joke by the forgotten humorist who decorated the east front of the Colonial Office. This accomplished person, whose exquisite parodies of extinct statesmen in Imperial attitudes enliven the somewhat melancholy lives of the pelicans in St. James's Park, shared Nature's abhorrence of a vacuum. He flourished with tropical luxuriance about the year 1866, and disliked blank spaces. His treatment of them, which was generally either historical or vegetable, lapsed in one magnificent instance into the more facile method of allegory. Having punched a number of windows in the wall which separates the Colonial Secretary from the traffic in Whitehall, he proceeded to embellish the curved spaces above them, which a less fertile genius

would have left empty, with several figures of young persons in the Victorian nude. These are well provided with those assorted fruits, cereals, steam locomotives, and spinning jennies which are known to mythologists as *attributes*. They are believed to represent continents, and the title of each continent is marked in plain figures underneath each immodest but symbolic person. There are six continents, and they are called Europe, Asia, Africa, America, Australasia, and Education : it is a profound allegory.

One should add that the last continent owes considerably less than its colleagues to the exploration of Englishmen. Indeed, it has never been satisfactorily ascertained whether the English mistrust Education because it is suspected of a connexion with Lord Haldane, or Lord Haldane because he is feared to have had relations with Education. The sixth continent is, like Tunis, an odd place full of dates. Its sheds are all watersheds, and its gardens are all kindergartens. There are no

songs except the Gender Rhymes, and its literature has all been transposed (with the assistance of the late Dean Bradley) into *Oratio obliqua*. It is, in fine, a continent which is more at home in a University than in the narrower limits of the universe, and it belongs more obviously to the Montessori than to the solar system. That is the deluge of reflection that has been provoked by the erratic symbolism of a Victorian sculptor in a hurry to finish off his decorations in time for Mrs. Disraeli's At Home in the cold weather of 1867.

There is, on the face of it, no inherent reason why one should not apply the geographical method to the examination of the works of man as well as to that of the wonders of Nature. The mind of Balzac is habitually described in terms of undergrowth and jungle by those indefatigable impostors who urge young men to read the whole *Comédie Humaine*, and are presumably forgiven because they know not what they do. The leading text-books on the

Canon and Apocrypha of Mr. Conrad will inevitably divide his work into spring- and neap-tides; and although Mr. Wells will drive his editors off the earth into the trackless wilderness of astronomy, the commentators on Mr. Bennett's Pentapolis *papyri* will find geography to be a convenient frame in which to examine the camber of Trafalgar Road and the off-licence of the "Tiger." But of all the worlds in which the mind of an author has ever roamed, the most geographical is the world of Edward Gibbon. The setting of his piece is entirely the long, curving background of the Roman frontier from Borkum to the Persian Gulf.

Almost the whole of Roman history is Roman geography. One may study the Republic (as indeed one can follow almost any Imperialist development) with a blank map and a pot of paint. Its record consists of a combined problem in mathematics and geography, showing how a city multiplied by an army became a peninsula, and how all three divided by a

navy turned into the Mediterranean seaboard. That is where one finds Rome in the year 44 B.C., with the provincial system roughly blocked out, and an attractive young woman of the name of Cleopatra wondering how she could get an introduction to a bull-necked man with a low forehead, named Antony, whom she had noticed making a rather noisy speech to a crowd in the Forum over the body of her old friend Julius Cæsar. At this point one leaves the Imperialist Republic, under which an aristocracy of army contractors conducted an empire without a civil service, a line of policy, or a system of defence; and one finds oneself, like Garrick between the Muses, led by Edward Gibbon and Professor Bury down the primrose path that leads to Romulus Augustulus.

Now, the history of the Roman Empire, unless one is to regard it as a mere concatenation of rather improper anecdotes, is the history of the Roman frontier. For the first time in the history of the Western world, policy turned

inland. Ancient history, before the frontier-builders of the early Empire, had been the history of littorals; and the history of early commerce was the history of a coasting trade and a few rivers. But with the Empire it became a problem (it is a problem that was never solved) to construct a military frontier that should protect the Mediterranean basin upon the North-east and the East. Augustus cleared the *glacis* of the Alps; and then, in the war in which Varus lost his legions, he attempted to open out to the line of the Elbe. The failure was acknowledged in the retreat, which was as complete as Napoleon's in 1814, to the line of the Rhine and in the organization of the provinces called, to the perpetual satisfaction of Mr. Belloc, the Germanies. In the wars of Germanicus, the advance to the Elbe was again attempted; but Claudius called a halt. He was an author of plays, an admirer of Cicero, and a spelling-reformer; but he invented Secretaries of State and had an Imperial

policy. The successive *pronunciamientos* which threw up Galba, Otho, Vitellius, and Vespasian interrupted the formation of the frontier, until the German *Limes* was formed across the angle between the lower Rhine and the middle Danube. Then an Andalusian named Trajan flung out the two great salients in the defence of which so much of the energy of the Empire was wasted: the salient of Bohemia in advance of the Danube frontier, and the salient of Irak, which was intended (if it was intended for anything) for the protection of Asia Minor by a singularly exaggerated outwork. After the effort of Trajan, the armies of the Empire fell back; and the manhood of Western Europe entered on a defensive warfare of four centuries against the barbarians who were to make the Middle Ages the admiration of clergymen, romantics, and architects.

That is the severe geographical skeleton upon which the history of the Empire should be constructed; and it is a piece of work which

General Young—a gallant officer whose military views are full of interest and originality—would have been well qualified to produce. He is, however, as Mr. James would have said, so quite heroically "out" to rewrite Gibbon; and the General follows with all the advantages of senior rank in the familiar footsteps of the sceptical Major in the Hants Militia. He does not, however, go the whole Gibbon; his manner in anecdote lacks the metallic precision of his predecessor's, and he is somewhat oppressively on the side of the angels. There is an indignant protest in his Preface against the high value set upon the age of the Antonines. General Young is gallantly prepared to detect a hey-day, which has hitherto escaped attention, between the terminal points of Constantine and Theodosius. If it is a healthy symptom (and every patriotic Englishman must hope that it is so) that one's art should all be shockingly out of drawing, there can be no doubt that he is quite correct. He is concerned to rescue

Constantine and Gratian from the rubbish-heap and to denounce "the error which has styled the retreat of the Roman army from Persia in 363 a great disaster instead of a glorious feat of arms": it is curious how the climate prevailing in Irak perpetually renders obscure the precise result of military operations conducted in Mesopotamia. But in spite of his scholarship and the art of photography, the General reads (it is a compliment to both) more like Gibbon's ancestor than his descendant. The real truth is that there is no Gibbon but Gibbon, and Gibbon is his prophet. The solemn march of his cadences, the majestic impropriety of his innuendo are without rivals in the respective annals of British eloquence and British indelicacy; and the call for a new Gibbon is no stronger than that to which Mr. Mallock acceded when he put pen to paper to write a *New Republic*.

SOME TURKS

THE Eastern or, as it is sometimes romantically termed, the old, old question originated in the days when the free and independent nationalities of Europe were snarling and scuffling in the ruins of the Roman Empire. Its solution, like the ballad style and the art of staining glass, is one of the things which the Middle Ages omitted to bequeath to the modern world; and that omission tempted the Nineteenth Century to produce the Treaty of Berlin, the ballads of Mr. William Morris, and the north window of Rugby Chapel.

The Roman Republic, which had carried to a supreme height the arts of portrait-sculpture and street-fighting, left to its successor a territory including the entire Mediterranean basin; and the Empire, having added to its dominions

during the reign of a lunatic some part of the British Isles, proceeded to protect its territory by the trace of the Roman frontier. The civilized world was converted into a single fortress by a chain of fortified positions which followed the lines of the Rhine, the Danube, and the Euphrates. That fortress faced towards the East, because civilization was threatened solely by the surplus population of Asia, and it became the business of the Roman power to protect its outworks. The history of the ancient world is the history of European resistance to the Asiatic *Drang nach Westen;* and when this resistance failed to maintain against its enemies the line of the Roman frontier, the history of the ancient world came to a sudden and chaotic end. Europe passed into "the filth and falsehood of the Middle Ages," as it was elegantly described by the Reverend Hugh McNeile, in a speech on Church extension delivered at Freemasons' Hall in the year 1839; and the power of Islam, which had

brushed away the Crusades like a swarm of flies, entered Europe by the gate of the Balkans. Constantinople went down like a rotten tree; and whilst the first men of the Renaissance were staring incredulously across the North Atlantic, the Turks watered their horses in the Danube.

The Turkish question, which has been answered in various tones from the elaborate irony of Lord Beaconsfield to the synthetic wisdom of the Conference of London, is a successor in the direct line of a dozen Eastern questions which were forced upon Europe by the collapse of the Roman line. The Eastern March of European civilization was protected by the successive efforts of the Franks, the Germans, the Czechs and the Poles; and it seemed sometimes that Christendom was almost united by the danger in the East, just as Gambetta sought to unite French republicans by the appeal *Regardez la trouée des Vosges.* It has been observed by sensitive historians that the

destruction of European things comes always from the East; even M. Benedetti made his first public appearance as Secretary of Legation at Constantinople. Timur, Jenghiz, and Attila came upon Europe from the East; and this sinister succession has been responsible for a long series of sombre perorations. But it is perhaps pardonable to point out that barbarian invaders have come always from the East, because there was, prior to the discovery of America, nowhere else for them to come from.

It is almost five centuries since the Turkish question entered upon its European phase. When the fall of Constantinople substituted the organized effort of Islam for the random and seasonal raids of unco-ordinated barbarians, the problem was presented for solution in its acutest and most painful form. It did not vary in its factors between the collapse of the Genoese infantry in the year 1453 and the Victorian sensation of 1876, when Mr. Gladstone startled

the readers of his pamphlets with the most effective employment of foreign names in the English language :

" Their Zaptiehs and their Mudirs, their Bimbashis and their Yuzbashis, their Kaimakams and their Pashas, one and all, bag and baggage, shall, I hope, clear out from the province they have desolated and profaned."

The writer's reference was to the province of Bulgaria, to which, if Amsterdam messages were to be believed, the genial presence of the Bashi-bazouk returned during the late war in response to the cordial invitation of the local authorities.

The problem set to European intelligence by the Turkish Empire was in its elements a simple one. The advance of the Ottoman Turks had encamped upon European soil a deeply religious and highly military people, who combined an enlightened monotheism with an ability to fight behind entrenchments. In face of this

power, which controlled Asia Minor, the Balkan Peninsula, and the waters of the Black Sea, two solutions were practicable; indeed, it is notable in political history as the sole conjunction of events which did not inspire Mr. Gladstone to confront his countrymen with three alternatives. For there were only two. Either the Turkish power must be stabilized by the French (and later the German) policy of foreign commerce and reform; or it must be driven out of Europe by the Austrian (and later the Russian) policy of expulsion by armed force. The history of the Eastern question consists of the alternation of these two courses; and what our fathers used picturesquely to call the Concert of Europe was confined in its repertoire to variations upon these two themes.

The crusading efforts of Holy Russia form a familiar chapter of European history; but the Austrian phase of the Eastern question is a more neglected subject. The Austrian power was driven directly upon the alternative of

expulsion by the great offensive of 1683, which had brought the Spahis of Kara Mustapha within sight of Vienna; and it became the object of the more intelligent advisers of the Emperor Charles VI to convert the Hapsburg monarchy into a Danubian power at the expense of Turkey. The memoirs of Prince Eugène, whose trilingual signature *Eugenio von Savoie* is a convenient indication of the cosmopolitan allegiance of Austrian statesmen, contains a remarkable picture of those Turkish wars in which the infidel displayed all the courtesy of Saladin towards crusaders in periwigs. His Highness had a remarkable taste for sermons; and it may be doubted whether his aphorism *C'est le premier jour qu'on entre en campagne que le public doit être informé des alliances* would find any extensive favour with the Union of Democratic Control. His taste for *de bien jolis airs d'opéra-comique* was almost light-minded; and his opinion of the English ("I paid great court to Ministers. I gave presents, because

England is a great country for buying") is worthier of a disillusioned Whip than a distinguished stranger. But Eugène had a just appreciation of the Turkish genius for spade-work, which he believed them to have inherited from the Romans. If his theory is correct, it is by a delicious irony that the Osmanli have employed Plevna, Tchataldja, and Gallipoli to impress Europeans with the Roman tradition. The memoirs of Eugène are full of the characteristic names and actions of the Turkish wars :

"The Bashaw and the garrison were massacred. The Seraskier burnt Novigrad to the ground. . . . There was a Bashaw amongst our prisoners whom I questioned to no purpose upon the plans of Kara Mustapha ; but the action of four Hussars, who stood with drawn swords ready to cut him to pieces, prevailed upon him to confess that Szegedin had been his object."

In a conversation held at Rastadt two years after, Malplaquet Eugène gave to Villars a vivid picture of savage warfare on the lower Danube, where one met "their flanking Spahis with their cursed howls of *Allah! Allah!* and their trick of coming on by fifties round a little flag." This encounter of Viennese cosmopolitans with the militant theology of Asia was a singular experience for the men of the Eighteenth Century; and it forms one of the queerest chapters in the history of the Eastern question.

That question may be studied from either of two angles. It is customary in Europe to follow the European side of the duel, and to trace the transitions by which the crusader's sword passed from Austria to Russia, and from Russia to the Balkan League. It is a line of study which enables one to appreciate Eugène's wise prophecy to his master in the year 1734 that the Serbs and Bosniaks would inevitably oppose the House of Hapsburg; and it affords

the exquisite spectacle of Lord Beaconsfield congratulating his Peers on the well-founded opinion of Count Bismarck that "Turkey in Europe once more exists." But it is sometimes worth while to examine the problem of Turkey from the angle of Turkey. The experiment must seem almost as attractive as to examine the problem of evil from the angle of the Evil One; but it is worth making. Sir Mark Sykes, who will probably be known to posterity as the author of a perfect parody of the Drill-book, once made the attempt; and he is, in spite of a shocking conviction that history is really amusing, a most attractive historian. Some such foundation is urgently needed, if the Englishman who thinks about the Eastern question is to understand what the Turk thinks about the Western question. The Turk is usually the last person who is considered in those re-arrangements of his territory which are so generously undertaken by others on his behalf; and it is perhaps time to call him

before the curtain, if only as author of the piece.

The historian's views on the problem of Armenia are a trifle startling in one of his nationality; he finds the Armenians profoundly unpleasing, especially when leavened by American missionary effort; he announces that "the Armenian national revival was a calamity which has not yet reached its catastrophe"; and he is inclined to agree with the unpopular opinion of the late Sultan Abdul Hamid that the removal of the Armenian question can only be effected by the removal of the Armenians. His real sympathy is for the Arab on the sufficient grounds that he is a monotheist and a Fine Fellow; and one accepts with respect the opinions of a traveller whose journeys make the map of Asia Minor look like an illustration to the Acts of the Apostles.

But the foremost merit of Sir Mark Sykes as an observer is that, like James Morier, he appreciated the supreme absurdity of the East.

It has been justly observed that there is nothing funnier than a foreigner; and the solemn imbecility of Orientals is one of the most delightful spectacles provided by Providence for the entertainment of Englishmen. He met a Kurd, who expressed my own objection to being photographed, because "God only knows what is looking through those great eyes." His escort was commanded by a sergeant who had been sentenced, by the adorable fatuity of the East, to one hundred years' imprisonment for murder; and he met in the middle of a desert a genial little man who had got a hundred and fifty years for robbing the Alexandretta mail. As a Conservative, Sir Mark could appreciate the comedy of *Huriyeh*, the Turkish equivalent of *Liberté*, *Egalité*, *Fraternité*, which inspired young officers in 1909 to say *J'adore le jambon*, *je bois le koniak* in the frenzy of emancipation. But above all there is the pure farce of the Boundary Commission on the Turco-Persian frontier, which, finding itself totally unprovided

with any form of map, was permanently and pardonably drunk. Asia is not a mystery, where sinister men with cruel eyes and queer crooked scimitars crouch and mutter round low fires in black Bedouin tents : Asia is one of the jokes that Europe cannot see.

SOME SERBS

It was the Dictionary of Quotations (that great, if somewhat confused, thinker) who said *Inter arma silent leges ;* and it was never more obvious than in that saying that the Romans had not the advantage of our acquaintance. The moderns may have their weaknesses of principle and conduct ; but it will stand always to their credit that they have given the lie to every proverb upon which they could lay hands. Ten minutes with the Defence of the Realm Regulations would have knocked the Roman aphorist off his proverbial perch. Since those summer holidays when five Powers went to war instead of going to the seaside, we have lived under what Professor Dicey would call the Rain of Law. The official imperative was never more categorical ; the toga would appear to have

forgotten its Ciceronian obligation to yield to the sword. On one afternoon in that first summer M. Noulens tabled in the French Chamber of Deputies eighteen *projets de loi :* it was the first *rafale* of the legislative " seventy-five." Great Britain, by the combined energies of Parliament and the Privy Council, produced in three months a Handbook of Emergency Legislation which dwarfed a volume of the Annual Statutes ; and the Germans in Belgium volleyed proclamations with a reckless profusion of ammunition.

But no provisional enactment of the whole season was more sensational than the decree by which the Servian Government repealed Grimm's Law. It had resulted from the sinister machinations of that philological Hun that the English for ' Servia ' was in some danger of confusion with the Latin for ' slave ' ; King Peter's Minister at the Court of King George was therefore authorized to announce to the panic-stricken compositors of the English-

speaking race that " b " was no longer etymologically interchangeable with " v." However ridiculous it may appear to carry warfare into the alphabet, one was willing to accede to every wish of a bitterly tried ally. But the alteration represents, in one view, a considerable loss. The name Servia, which cannot connote servility to any one except an ingenious schoolboy, stands in history for the full record of a vigorous member of the European family. If the past of Servia were dishonourable, one could have sympathized with the change. But when one can hear in that name the long roll of the wars against Turkey, one is unwilling to let it pass out of the history of the war against the Magyar.

The historical mission of the Servian Empire in the days when Durazzo played Calais to Brindisi's Dover was to provide a buffer-state between Rome and Byzantium. It has been observed by railway-engineers and Afghan statesmen that the principal qualities of a buffer are resilience and stability; and there seems

no reason why Jugo-Slavia should not exhibit them when it is called on to perform the less heroic duties of buffer between Italy and Hungary. The problem of its reconstruction depends closely and entirely upon the past and present distribution of the race. We must be careful to reconstruct not any old Servia, but the historical Old Servia. Yet although you may permit a man to call Agram "Zagreb," it is not easy to surrender Spalato to the people who call it "Split." Since the Serb race occupies the north-western *massif* of the Balkan Peninsula, which has a littoral upon the Adriatic, it has been necessary at some points to modify the logical demands of strict ethnology in accordance with the political requirements of Italy, whose interest in that sea is supreme. But it was at least possible in an intelligent demarcation of Slav and Latin areas to eliminate the astonishing imposture of Albania. In so far as the Mpret's forsaken subjects were genuine Albanians, their autonomy represented

a mildly satisfactory solution of a Balkan Ulster question. But when it was agreed between Rome and Budapest to endow that amazing creation with an ample coast-line and an Epirote province, it was a fraud upon Servia and Greece. In later life the deformed child of an unhappy marriage ceased to be even entertaining; and its death by the simultaneous amputation of Epirus and Valona left no mourners: England, by some fortunate miracle, possesses no Albania Society.

The history of modern Servia, like the history of modern Europe, begins in the age of the French Revolution. The Pashalik of Belgrade, after an interval of mild reform, was revisited in 1804 by the familiar circumstance of a Turkish massacre. An ex-officer of Austrian police, named George Petrovich, headed a national rising, which converted a provincial riot into a war of liberation and founded the royal house of Kara-George. When Napoleon marched the Army of England from the Boulon-

nais to the Danube, the Servian nation was little more than a religious conspiracy; in the year of Wagram it was a sovereign state. But four years later the reaction in Servia, as in Western Europe, returned in triumph. The national leadership had passed to Milosh Obrenovich; and in the rainy autumn of 1813, which saw Napoleon ride whistling into Leipzig, the Turks returned to the disloyal Pashalik with the genial accompaniments of Spahi feudalism and famine. Milosh opened a second war of liberation in 1815, and Servia was more fortunate than France in its Hundred Days. Six months of war and fifteen years of negotiation secured Servian independence. The new State did not become, like Greece, the darling of Russian diplomacy; and the *enfants perdus* of English drawing-rooms, who were prepared to die for Ypsilanti in the name of Pericles, never fought the battles of Milosh Obrenovich. The Servian state came into existence by the leave of Turkey and without the humiliation of

European assistance. The liberation of Italy, which had preached the principle *Italia fara da se*, was the work of Napoleon III; but the unaided *Risorgimento* of Servia was as creditable to its national effort as the military revelation of 1912, by which the Balkan monarchies demonstrated to their disgusted patrons that they could walk alone.

The rise of Servia was an ungenial education in politics. It is the misfortune of "nations struggling to be free," when they lose the illusions of their youth, that they learn the advantages of opportunism. To that lesson the Serb added a natural aptitude for sudden death; and this combination, which brought him successfully through two European wars in eighteen months, has helped him to survive a third. It is a drastic experience of almost uninterrupted warfare. One knows nothing of Serb humour except that it laughs "ha-ha" to the trumpeters.

The Anglo-Servian alliance was perhaps the

queerest combination of the war which sent Sikhs to restore King Albert to Brussels and Australians to force the Straits for Russia. The Serb has made the bitter discovery that wars are won by man-power alone, and he had learnt in battle and pestilence the truth of the Biblical observation, "The sinews of war is death." That is why he was not an unworthy ally, and the alliance was not inconsistent with the tradition of British policy. Great Britain, by the policy of the Balance of Power, was the standing ally of small nations. It may be true that she prefers to keep them small, and that she takes little interest in her foreign relations when they cease to be poor relations. But it was by design and not by accident that she sided in the war with Servia and Belgium. The alliance of Belgium made a singular appeal to British opinion; it would be no more than justice if the name of Servia, which has won greater battles in the face of greater odds, were raised to an equal height.

SOME REVOLUTIONARIES

In days when every newspaper reader is necessarily something of a connoisseur in revolutions, and Macaulay's schoolboy (if he is still alive) could tell us the precise distinction between a bread-riot, an *émeute*, and a *pronunciamiento*, it is refreshing to be taken back to the original source of all revolutionary inspiration, and to walk once more through the hot French summers of the years between 1789 and 1794. One was growing a trifle weary of the mechanical vulgarity of modern revolutions, with their motor-lorries and machine-guns and confusion in the telephone exchanges; and the return to the pikes and simplicity of the French primitives is a delightful experience. One may even hope that a revival of interest in the *Primavera*

of revolution may give us a Pre-Leninite Brotherhood.

But, to say truth, the excursion, as one makes it with the modern historian for guide, is a trifle explanatory; and as this indomitable expositor hurries the eager amateur of the Revolution round some familiar corner, he is almost apt to recapture that ungrateful desire to be left alone in the Chamber of Horrors which must so often have swept over Dante, as he toured another Inferno with another (and still more distinguished) cicerone. It is enough for most of us, when the overture falls silent and the curtain rises on that broad and lighted stage on which the Revolution was played out, to sit quiet in our stalls and to watch the unrolling of the great—the greatest—drama. But such sedentary inactivity as this hardly suffices for the heroic temper of a Mrs. Webster. Avid of explanations, she must be up and doing among the scene-shifters; she threads her way through the stage-crowds, interrogates the property

man, and drags her gaping readers through the *coulisses* of the Revolution, as she tracks down one after another of the secret factors that lie behind the familiar frontage of its history.

The plain truth about the Revolution is that it just happened ; and the study of that happening should be enough for most of us. One may study it without either the *manie de l'inédit* which impels the indomitable M. Lenôtre to give us foot-note biographies of all the people who were passing along the street outside a building where something was really happening, or the engaging persecution-mania with which the latest of its historians tears off the mask of history.

In sympathetic obedience to a strong contemporary tendency, she finds German influences at work in the causes of the explosion. Marie Antoinette, the inevitable heroine of the piece, appears as a sound anti-German, who is consequently victimized by Prussian diplomacy ; and the *Illuminati* devote an early Fabian

subtlety to the task of plunging France into pre-Bakuninist anarchy. But the greatest efforts of her ingenuity are reserved for the unmasking of the Orleanist plot. Philippe Egalité, who normally appears on the revolutionary stage as a mild buffoon, is cast for a sinister, but leading part; and the whole tide of the Revolution, in this new philosophy, is drawn after him by that moon-faced man. Writing with the full gusto of a Bonapartist pamphleteer under Louis Philippe, our lady detective finds the Orleanist hand active on every side. The party, which was apparently organized under the disreputable lieutenancy of Choderlos de Laclos, is made to include the most mixed revolutionary company: Mirabeau, Danton, Marat, Camille Desmoulins, Dumouriez, and Manuel all appear in Orleanist livery; and the food shortage of '89, the riots which preceded the storm of the Bastille, and the *journée* of June 20, 1792, are all attributed to this novel power of evil. Such an analysis of the secret causes of revolutionary

events is profoundly interesting to connoisseurs of the Revolution. But it hardly produces a narrative of events that is suitable for the novice who cannot distinguish the *Veto* from the *Maximum*. And one sometimes wonders, as one reads her ingenious exposition of how one statesman worked the rain-barrel while a colleague was busy producing rolls of thunder from the tin trays, whether the storm which blew down half the barriers in Europe was really a mere triumph of theatrical effects.

This Mrs. Webster is a trifle unfortunately inclined to treat the merits of the Revolution as a subject that is still open to discussion. Her authorities are sometimes stigmatized as "pro-revolutionary writers"; and one is tempted to ask whether the historians of the Flood should be similarly classified as "pro-diluvian" and "anti-diluvian." She sometimes handles her great men with a regrettable tone of aunt-like irritation, which betrays her into describing Robespierre as a "quarrelsome nonentity," and

missing the great point of Mirabeau behind what she airily terms his "gigantic humbug." And she is tempted in an epilogue to adorn her tale with some extremely dubious morals. From the mildly astonishing conclusion that "the immense reforms brought about during the revolutionary era were not the result of the Revolution; it was to the King and his enlightened advisers . . . that the reforms in government were primarily due," she proceeds to the more perilous consideration of the present discontents. "Pacifists and Internationalists" catch it, as Mr. Henry James would have said, so quite beautifully hot; and the economic breakdown of Eastern Europe is heroically attributed to the machinations of "cosmopolitan Jewish financiers, who hope by the overthrow of the existing order to place all capital beneath their own control." This state of mind is on a par with the anti-German fervour of her "O for the touch of a Hidden Hand" on almost every page of history. One is reminded of the

narrow temper of that war-time patriot who wished to abolish German measles and to rename it *Pox Britannica.* This passion for the detection of plots at all costs, which is an official merit in policemen and an entertaining accomplishment in the bypaths of historical research, may become, if left unchecked, an obsession leading to that political persecution-mania, which is the obsession of so many bright contemporary minds.

THE HUNS

One day, when all the best books in the world get written, instead of being merely projected after dinner, some energetic disciple of Sir James Frazer will write a really good handbook of international mythology. It will contain a full study of those queer, distorted figures in which the people of each nation have thought fit to personify and misconceive the neighbouring races; and considerable space will be given to the startling changes that sweep from time to time over the stock characters that people the stage of the international caricaturist. It will be, as one sees it now, a large, distinguished-looking book in a rather quiet, dignified binding, and the price—unless in the interval something drastic happens to the book trade—will probably be prohibitive for all persons except

that fortunate minority which is privileged to receive review and complimentary copies. But it will be a good book.

There will be a careful analysis of John Bull, who will be methodically disintegrated into his constituent parts; the hat, the boots, the buckskin breeches, and the resolute smile will each be traced to its original significance; and a special section will be devoted to that less genial figure whose aggressive denture, flanked by whiskers and surmounted by a bold check deer-stalker, was formerly the despair of Continental Anglophobes.

The author, if he is quite worthy of my plan, will trace with quiet irony the changing phases of the British conception of France—the gaunt Mounseer of the late Eighteenth Century, the frantic Jacobin of the Revolutionary War, the ridiculous, bearded buffoon of the middle Nineteenth Century whose ties, top-hats, and manners in the hunting-field placed him frankly beyond the pale, the improper but undeniably

attractive young person in short skirts that ushered in the Entente Cordiale, and the final, god-like figure of to-day that combines the Greek profile of the Third Republic and the inspired eye of Joan of Arc with faint indications of the personal appearance of M. Poincaré.

But he will find the richest material of all in the successive figures that have been used in this country for the representation of Germany. There has been a steadily swelling diapason of popular myth. The German people has been represented to the British intelligence by a marvellous procession of carnival grotesques. First there was the simple Suabian peasant whose untutored joy of life was expressed mainly in wood-carving, *Volkslieder*, and the fabrication of cuckoo clocks; his profile ran largely to porcelain pipe, and he stood respectfully aside as blind philosophers and deaf composers of classical music, of whom the upper classes appeared almost entirely to consist, came pounding absent-mindedly down the

road. Then came the long-haired, sentimental professors of 1848, whose interests were divided symmetrically between tobacco and the Fatherland, followed after a short interval by the tall, red-bearded conquerors of 1870.

It is at this point in the procession of mythical figures that one expects the most elaborate scenic effects in the German myth.

One always hopes, if the historian knows his business, that he will set his stage in 1871 with the Paladins grouped impressively round that never-to-be-forgotten grandfather to whose memory the ex-Emperor so frequently invited his Brandenburgers to raise their glasses. There may even be a distant rumble of Martin Luther's hymn, and a flash of diabolical cunning from the Iron Chancellor. Like a well-drilled audience at a cinema, we have all learnt so thoroughly what to look forward to on these occasions that the substitution of the facts of history for the expected effect comes almost as a shock : it is almost as though the villain's

motor-car had trundled precariously out on to the swaying bridge made of a single plank—and the bridge held. The true facts of the last seventeen years of the reign of William I are sadly disappointing. Behind the whiskered rectitude of a good husband, *modèle* 1850, one may detect the unbending temper of a soldier-monarch; and Bismarck was not nearly so wicked as his Autobiography. The story goes on, and the old Emperor fades away. A curt dismissal of the reign of the Emperor Frederick will distress those English readers who always seem to find a lingering enjoyment in that delicate aroma of romance which in this country is inseparable from throat complaints with fatal terminations.

The rest of the story brings one to William II. The historian's foot must display remarkable agility among the hot ashes of so much—and so hot—contemporary controversy. The ingredients of modern Germany, the arrogance, the bad manners, the new colonialism, and the

pride of purse, have come largely from a single cause: having passed two centuries in the apostolic poverty enforced by the devastation of the Thirty Years' War, the country passed suddenly in the middle years of the Nineteenth Century through its Industrial Revolution. It went in with a population of landlords and labourers, and it came out with an industrial system and a wealthy class dangerously resembling those which it saw in control of the British Empire. The result was the naval effort, the Chinese adventure, Berlin-Baghdad, and Liège-Mons. And somewhere in that chapter we are still floundering.

THE REDS

THERE is a passage of singular eloquence in Mr. Conrad's *Mirror of the Sea*—or perhaps one should call it, in order to enforce the vital distinction between art and its poor relation, Nature, the mirror of Mr. Conrad's sea—in which he paints with the rotund dignity of a decorator of symbolical ceilings the portraits of the east and west winds. "The King of the West . . . is a barbarian of a northern type. Violent without craftiness, and furious without malice, one may imagine him seated masterfully, with a double-edged sword on his knees, upon the painted and gilt clouds of the sunset, bowing his shock head of golden locks, a flaming brand over his breast, imposing, colossal, mighty-limbed, with a thundering voice. . . . The other, the East King, the king of blood-red

sunrises, I represent to myself as a spare Southerner, with clear-cut features, black-browed and dark-eyed, grey-robed, upright in sunshine, resting a smooth-shaven cheek in the palm of his hand, impenetrable, secret, full of wiles, fine-drawn, keen—meditating aggressions."

The contrast, which is so nobly drawn, doubtless possesses a meteorological significance upon which it is hardly possible to comment unless one shares Mr. Conrad's rare advantages of maritime experience. But to the mere historian, who has never threaded the Straits or beaten up across the Bay, it seems vividly suggestive of the difference between the two winds of revolution that have swept across Europe in the past four generations.

The west wind, which set from the quarter of Paris in the last decade of the Eighteenth Century and blew steadily upon Central and Southern Europe for fifty years until it fanned Germany and Italy into a blaze, was a genial

hurricane. It might blow things down, if their bad fortune had stood them in its path. Feudalism, privilege, and petty monarchy tilted and fell before the rush of it. But after it had swept the land clear, it brought rain and fertility out of the west; and men planted hopefully and reaped with gratitude in the clearings which it had made among the tall trees. The recurring French Revolutions of 1789, 1830, and 1848 were eminently fruitful. But the east wind, the Russian Revolution, is a barren business. Driving hard out of the east, it cuts like a knife and blasts and withers like the sirocco. Where it has blown, things do not easily learn to grow again; and its masters seem to sit very like Mr. Conrad's East King, "impenetrable, secret, full of wiles, fine-drawn, keen—meditating aggressions." It has inspired the world with an unwholesome fear of revolutions, and it is good to be reminded by the history of the last century that there was once a revolution which redeemed Europe.

The Red influence, which was more familiar to our grandfathers as a tricolour, continued to live and work after the Guard had reeled back at Waterloo. In 1830 it rose again in the singularly blameless incarnation of King Louis Philippe; and once more it fanned as much of Europe as looked west to France.

A German historian's study of the French influence upon Germany in the Thirties is entertaining, if only because one always enjoys the grimaces of an historian engaged in the assimilation of unpalatable facts. The poor man positively writhes as he sets down on his page the part played by "the outworn ideas of '89" in transforming the face of German history. In reality (and the unhappy patriot knows it perfectly well) the municipal history of Paris between the years 1789 and 1793 was responsible, through its European reactions, for converting the comic *bürgerlich* Germany, which Kotzebue caricatured in Krähwinkel, into that perplexed country in mid-stream of the Euro-

pean movement which groped for ideas, stumbled through the revolutions of 1848, and drifted with a feeble gesture of protest into the majestic procession of Bismarckian Imperialism.

There is something a trifle quaint in reading at this distance of time the writings of the once dreaded Treitschke. One almost recovers the queer, far-away feeling of the year 1914, when England fell suddenly into war with a mysterious race of anthropophagi which was reported by travellers to devote its spare time to the worship of a heathen trinity called Nietzsche, Treitschke, and Bernhardi. The adventure of reading Treitschke quite gives one the stale flavour of early recruiting posters, and the sound of Mr. Asquith unsheathing his sword comes faintly down the wind.

Treitschke, to say truth, was a person of undue vehemence. He wrote history so like an irritable headmaster that he not infrequently reduces his reader to the corresponding state of mind of an angry schoolboy. This prepos-

terous foreigner with his allusive omniscience is sometimes too much even for the most tolerant and modest student. There is a dreadful passage in which he explains, with a sweep of the gown, that with the Reform Bill of 1832 " the great days of English Parliamentary life were drawing to a close."

With a particularly unhappy prevision he indicates a likely future in which " it remained extremely dubious whether England would not some day tranquilly abandon the new protégé " of 1839 : the abandonment of Belgium, when it came was not noticeably an act of British policy. The poor man was always unfortunate when he rolled his angry eye in the direction of perfidious Albion. Palmerston, whom he irritably labelled " the Talleyrand of Parliamentarianism," naturally incurs his particular displeasure ; and it is a just revenge that a vigorous description of the Foreign Minister is defaced by an exquisite allusion to his " walk home with elastic tread with a flower always

in his mouth." It presumably represents the straw that *Punch* so invariably (and inaccurately) attributed to him; but the Right Honourable gentleman rarely masqueraded as Carmen in Parliament Street.

Treitschke despised small States with the full contempt of an adopted German. But one hopes, for his credit and the reputation of Czecho-Slovakia, that Professor Masaryk will never, as Mr. Henry James would knowingly have said, "let on" that the historian's name should be spelt Trschky.

THE IRONSIDES

Of course we all know Science when we meet her: any student of Victorian monuments will tell you that. A large lady in a chiton, carrying a steam-roller in one hand and a fret-saw in the other, is bound to be noticed anywhere. One mostly meets her on one of those thronged provincial pediments that look like petrified scenes from a jumble-sale of the Parthenon Women-Workers' Guild. She was a nice sensible person with fixed data and definite conclusions, who parted her hair exactly in the middle and invented the spinning-jenny and the steam locomotive. Perhaps there were moments when she liked to have her little fling at Genesis. But that was only her way. She was on excellent terms with all constituted authorities, and you knew exactly where you

were with her. Nowadays, however, things are changing. There are light-minded young things like Psychology, with too many data and no conclusions, and Sociology, with too many conclusions and no data. Any collection of inaccurate information is described as a Science ; and the lady herself is left, like Mrs. Gummidge, thinking of the Victorian old 'uns.

The position of Political Science is about halfway between the giddy young things and Science in the Albert Memorial sense. It has a suspicious attraction for dangerously modern persons like Mr. H. G. Wells. But its existence is recognized by at least one of our older universities, and it has been the object of attentions from Mr. W. H. Mallock. On the whole it is probably old enough to be respectable ; Hobbes and Aristotle are surely adequate witnesses to anybody's character.

There has not been much of it in England since 1688. The Seventeenth Century was one of the few periods when England thought

politically. In the years between Gunpowder Plot and the Glorious Revolution, England was interested, as it was rarely to be interested again, in English politics; it was so interested that it beheaded one English king and exiled another. Whilst Europe was working out in the Thirty Years' War the decline of Spain, the transformation of Germany, and the rise of France, Englishmen discussed with more than Austinian fervour the true sources of sovereignty in the State. The printing-press was full of political theory, and men became articulate in controversy even at Court. For a short time the people of England even appeared to be capable of intellectual indignation. A committee was appointed to read the *Leviathan* for traces of political impropriety, and Hobbes was threatened with the prospect of prosecution. It is not easy to imagine an Attorney-General who would be sufficiently interested in principles to prosecute Mr. H. G. Wells at the age of seventy-eight for the opinions expressed in *Anticipations*.

England in the Seventeenth Century had definitely emerged from the Middle Ages. The Reformation had cut the painter (and a great many of the painters); and whilst Western Europe settled down to the armed discussion of religious doctrine, England began to talk politics with enormous energy. The Papacy had been expelled from the island by a strong monarchy; but that Protestant monarchy was confronted almost at once by the equally Protestant temper of individualism. The whole history of the century in England was derived from that confrontation; it was equally responsible for the Cavalier's doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings and for the Roundhead's doctrine of the political right of Parliaments. Since the King of England was a highly-educated Scot, conditions seemed favourable for the opening of a lengthy debate; and in the political ideas of James I the first shot was fired. In the teeth of John Knox's view that "no oath or promise can bind the people to obey and maintain

tyrants against God, and if they have ignorantly chosen such as after declare themselves unworthy, most justly may they depose and punish them" (which is slightly suggestive of Treitschke's doctrine of contractual validity *rebus sic stantibus*), James aimed gradually, but with decision, at the doctrine of Divine Right.

The British Solomon, when he observed in 1610 that "the state of monarchy is the supremest thing on earth, for kings are not only God's lieutenants upon earth, but even by God Himself are they called gods," is not so much reminiscent of the House of David as of the House of Hohenzollern; he even disapproved of the Dutch because they were so shockingly republican. Bacon appears to have supported his master to the full; his contempt for lawyers displays an admirable modesty on the subject of his own profession, his economic observation that "the increase of any State must be upon the foreigners" is painfully premonitory of Mr. Chamberlain's theory of the incidence of

import duties; and his foreign policy was frankly Bernhardian. But when he tore himself away from the manuscript of *The Merry Wives* to write to Windsor, he adopted the prostrate attitude of a sound monarchist.

Absolutism was soon faced by its enemies; and the lawyers prepared the Great Rebellion as soundly as they were afterwards to make the French Revolution. Coke and Selden, Robespierre and Danton were in turn the leaders of a group of revolutionary barristers. Coke was not found upon the barricades, but entrenched behind the more impenetrable volumes of his Reports; Selden, an admirable conversationalist, was, in one judgment, the first Whig; it is a distinction which Dr. Johnson would not have hesitated to bestow. And so the Revolution was controlled by the lawyers, until in 1647 there entered the Army, and England went to the splendid experiment of the English Republic.

THE NORMANS

THERE is undoubtedly an air about the Normans: you must have noticed it on the Bayeux Tapestry. That fascinating perspective, those becoming nose-pieces, that graceful attitude of perpetually stooping to conquer have all combined to lend distinction to those reformed pirates. They have, so to say, an historical *chic*; and, as is usual with smart people, their excess of style is not diminished by their deficiency of character. One is proud, historically, of associating with them. Nobody would dream of boasting about a Saxon incursion or a Roman occupation; but a Norman Conquest is somehow a different matter. It is an honour to be raided by them, a privilege to be burnt by them, and a distinction to be conquered by them. One feels, as the flames shoot up and the prisoners

troop down to the beach, that one is associating with gentlemen.

There is a queer streak of Norman history which lies across the early Middle Ages from Stavanger to Constantinople by way of Rouen, Battle Abbey, and Palermo. Any historian must recognize that the leading feature of the Normans was their constant habit of coming over. They came over, as appears from the map of Europe, almost anywhere and, as appears from the House of Lords, with almost anyone. In the beginning they emerged from Scandinavia in days when that region possessed a power of export that was almost as highly developed as its more recent capacity (if one remembers the blockade) for importation. They emerged with healthy appetites and a distaste for dogmatic religion in vessels which one historian describes (with a sudden whiff of Mr. Rudyard Kipling) as " shallow, clinker-built, half-decked craft " ; and they proceeded to make themselves exceedingly unpopular up and down the

coasts of Western Europe. Two routes presented themselves to the Norse cruiser-commander emerging from his fjord, as to the German commerce-destroyer putting out of Cuxhaven: he might either go through the North Sea and the Straits of Dover to the coasts of the English Channel, or he might sail North about Scotland by way of Iceland and the somewhat inadequate Promised Land of Greenland. As he was unaware of the attractive prospect afforded at the end of the latter route by the wigwams of the ancestors of so many of our friends, he selected the former. The result was the Duchy of Normandy, the Norman Conquest, the Anglo-Norman empire of the Angevin Kings, the Normans in Sicily, the Latin Empire of the East, and the short stories of M. de Maupassant.

In the earlier phase, the normal historian reveals an unholy taste for Sagas of the most sanguinary vintage. He lays about him with all the energy of the literary man in battle; his axe rattles about the helmets of his enemies,

the arrows fly frequent as Reparation Notes, and he finds time in the *mêlée* to make the most unpleasant physiological notes on the wounds of his adversaries. But this form of entertainment (Mr. Arnold Bennett called it "the Blood-tub" in its Bursley days) really misrepresents the Normans.

They were undeniably Norsemen, but if that was all, no one except epic poets would bother to remember them. They were also frigid and highly successful bureaucrats with a gift for administration that was almost Roman; no one would believe the yellow-haired athletes who populate the Sagas capable of inventing the Exchequer. Here the historian is bound to be a judicious, if not conspicuously original, gleaner in a field which many Ruths have worked over before his arrival, and he walks warily between the various Scyllæ and (to be exact) Charybdides which are provided by Professor Vinogradoff, Miss Norgate, and that inimitable controversialist, Mr. Round.

The Mediterranean career of those burglarious aristocrats from Norway is one of the strangest episodes in European history. Perspiring men with fair complexions succeeded in imposing an alien monarchy on Latin and even on Greek populations; their administration in the South was in some ways more efficient than in England; but the edifice was, as one historian writes, with an obvious eye to eventual translation into Latin prose, "brilliant but ephemeral, precocious but lacking in permanent results." It is a warning to Empire builders.

HERR V. TREITSCHKE

THERE is a story of Canon Hannay's about a lady who broke out in the same week as the war; but she was nothing to the literary gentlemen. In those first days of August, when the war swept across Europe like the wind out of Africa, there was an ugly rush of innumerable Pilots to weather the Storm. Mr. Wells hurried into his oilskins; Mr. Arnold Bennett jumped into his sea-boots; and the Poet Laureate heaved a melodious but archaic lead. By the fifth day of the French mobilization the autumn publishing season was in full swing; and the Society of Authors clustered round Sir Edward Grey, ingeminating, like Wilkins' Emma, that it would never desert him. It was as though the usual old gentleman in the usual *Punch*

cartoon had enquired from his window, "Watchman, what of the night?" and had been answered by the clear utterance of eight novelists, five poets, and Mr. Joseph McCabe. The mast was almost invisible under the mass of colours that had been nailed to it, and Mr. Kipling alone kept silence at the coming in of war: it was the silence of a realist confronted with reality.

Quite apart from its agreeable literary consequences (Mr. William Archer wrote an epic poem), this outburst produced a startling effect upon the war itself. The distinguished literary men who made it, were determined to save the State. The only difficulty was to find, at short notice, some one to save it from. We had for a few days the inspiring spectacle of a crowd of Ciceros looking for Catilines round every corner; and since one can hardly save one's country from people that one does not know, they very properly decided to save it from some one of whom they had already heard. Being

unfamiliar with the Germans of the General Staff, our guardian authors resolved unanimously to save us from the Germans of the study. Moltke was a name to them and Schlieffen was even less; but they had all read Nietzsche in the Nineties, and Treitschke was a familiar type of the Continental Anglophobe. That is how the war of armies became suddenly, and to its intense surprise, a war of ideas: it was a startling triumph of the penetrating pen over the unintelligent sword. Great Britain had executed a perfectly normal and proper intervention in favour of the balance of European power and against the possibility of a hostile control of the Low Countries. It was a *casus belli* that Bolingbroke could have understood and Canning would have applauded. But the authors of England discovered in it a forlorn hope led by the British diplomatic service against the perverted philosophy of Central Europe. That is how the Dual Alliance of Nietzsche and Treitschke was called into exist-

ence to hang like twin Boneys over the happy homes of England. It is a strange *galère* for a respectable war. The War of the Spanish Succession, which was fought for a very similar object, had a very similar opening. Louis XIV aspired to the control of Western Europe, and, as is usual on these occasions, violated Belgian neutrality. Great Britain very properly, though somewhat reluctantly, intervened; but nobody announced to the startled subjects of William III that they were engaged in a *jehad* against the immoral philosophy of Pascal and Bossuet, as illustrated by the French king's violation of the Barrier Treaty.

The truth is that wars, since they have ceased to be legitimate forms of religious controversy, are not wars of ideas; and in the present instance the selection of two writers as villains of the piece was unusually inept. The choice was not happy, because their names (unlike "Huns" and "guns") would not rhyme in

any circumstances—even when set to music—and the connexion of one of them with any operations of German policy had been singularly slender. Nietzsche, whose name has struck terror into a thousand sewing parties, was a remote and philosophic Pole. His contribution to the plot appears to be that, in the intervals of " a certain liveliness " with Wagner, he believed in force. But so did Carlyle ; and no one has yet demanded the destruction of Chelsea or suggested that the *Landsturm* went on its wicked, Carlylean way from Ghent to Warsaw to the Lowland lilt of " It's a long, long way to Ecclefechan."

The second villain was more obviously entitled to a place in the cast. The trouble with Treitschke is that he was a German. At a time when all respectable persons east of the Rhine were Saxons or Bavarians, or Mecklenburgers, Treitschke was a truculent, anti-particularist German. It all came of reading history, which has undermined so many bright intelligences.

Of course, he was not a German by extraction; but nationalists are rarely autochthonous. Patriots are made and not born; and there is nothing in Treitschke's blend of Bohemian ancestry with Prussian patriotism to startle a generation which is familiar with the Imperialism of Napoleon, who was not a Frenchman, or of Disraeli, who was not an Englishman. Treitschke's family were Czechs called Trschky; but they were persuaded, upon their immigration into Saxony, to substitute for that engaging sternutation a name that was less strikingly consonantal. Treitschke, however, although he retained in his ideas and in his controversial method some trace of the militant Protestantism which had centred in the Tyn Church of Prague, was born north of the Riesengebirge, and his father had been a soldier of some distinction in the Saxon army. It was only twenty years since Prussia had failed narrowly to obtain European sanction for the annexation of Saxony; and in a Saxon household Prussia was

hated more bitterly than the French. This education produced in Treitschke an inevitable reaction. The air was full of a vague nationalism; and the universities, when he went there, were the preserve of the *vieilles barbes* of 1848. After Olmütz, where Prussia suffered humiliation at the hands of Austria, the Hohenzollerns were regarded almost as the martyrs of the German cause; and when Treitschke went to Freiburg as a graduate of half the universities in South Germany, he worshipped Prussia with the full enthusiasm of a man who lived in Baden.

At Freiburg he developed still further his fierce detestation of *Kleinstaaterei*. The small States of Germany were not an inspiring spectacle; and Treitschke found himself in sympathy with Bismarck's elimination of the Middle States and Offenbach's later ridicule of the *Grande-Duchesse de Gerolstein*. An educated man revolted inevitably against the unintelligence of Rhenish Clericals, who looked alternately

to Vienna and to Rome, and against the unimportance of minor royalty, which looked exclusively at itself. Treitschke with his Prussian sympathies could not acquiesce in the mediatized motto "Beust will be Beust"; and he discerned in the Hohenzollern a dynasty that had done something for itself and for Germany, and in their present Minister a man who might do more. In the year of Sadowa Bismarck summoned him to Berlin and offered him a place in the Prussian Press Bureau; it was refused, and Treitschke departed to a chair at Kiel. There he endeavoured without marked success to impress upon the undergraduates of Schleswig-Holstein their place in German history; and he returned with obvious relief to Heidelberg. From this point Treitschke's academic career became an easy course of official preferment. In 1864 he had urged Prussia to annex the Danish Duchies:

"The good cause will triumph, the heirs of

Frederick the Great will reign in Schleswig-Holstein, and in a short time the nation will be ashamed of its own stupidity."

In 1870 he argued the case for the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine on the sound military basis that "we only demand the German lands of France and so much Romance land as is necessary for their security." His admission of military necessity as a test for the traces of frontiers has been as fatal to a defeated Germany as his later admission, made in the hopes that Germany would one day be an African or Asiatic Power, that coloured troops may be used in European warfare, was unpalatable to a Germany at war with Algerian France and Indian England.

As a lecturer and historian Treitschke developed two things which have made him a name to most of us. In company with most continental observers, he believed that England was in a state of hopeless decay, and that the

colonies, which it had obtained by fraud, might be removed by force, differing from Victor Hugo only in the view that Germany rather than France was the expectant heir. He was driven to this conclusion by a profoundly interesting philosophy of English history, which was not much further from the truth than most English readings of Continental history. His indignation was very properly stirred by the spectacle of the weak "John Bull" allied with the palsied Turk; and he offered the disinterested suggestion of an Anglo-Russian alliance. The suggestion has been gratefully acted on. But the neo-Turkish cry of *Deutschland über Allah* is hardly consistent with Treitschke's pronounced preference for the destruction of Turkey.

His second and more notorious contribution to politics is the theory of international contract, that

"all treaties under international law embody

the clause *rebus sic stantibus*. The State has no higher Judge above it, and will therefore conclude all treaties with that mental reservation."

It is extremely bad law; but it is exceedingly good Prussian history.

The strangest thing about Treitschke's career is that it was purely academic. He definitely became one of the wild-eyed prophetic lecturers of the Sixties, who paced the rostrum like a quarter-deck. There appears to be a place in German politics for the academic person, a fact which enabled Treitschke, who was completely deaf, to gain a hearing from the Reichstag, which he could not hear. The academic person has been less fortunate in his intrusions into the politics of other countries. Sir Richard Jebb sat for years at Westminster without importing into the proceedings of the House of Commons much of the level mood of Sophocles; Mr. Herbert Fisher (it is profoundly to his credit)

has never really gone into politics; and of Dr. Wilson, who deserted a Chair for a throne and left the throne for one of those eminences from which one is privileged to view all the kingdoms of the earth in highly undesirable company, it is too early, perhaps it will always be too early, to speak.

M. LÉON GAMBETTA

THE attitude of British opinion to foreign statesmanship was never better expressed than in a conversation *viva voce populi* overheard by Mr. Anstey some thirty years ago in the neighbourhood of the Marble Arch. An Irish patriot (patriotism was always an Irish export) was enlivening his hearers with a disquisition on the peculiar virtues of imprisonment (incarceration was ever an Irish pastime) as an inspiration and a stimulant:

"'. . . Some of the best and greatest men that ever lived have been in prison——'

"AN AUDITOR (*who seems to have reasons of his own for finding this argument particularly soothing*). 'Ear, *'ear!*'

"THE IRISH PATRIOT. 'Look at Gambetta!'

"A Dull Man (*to* Neighbour). '*Wot's* he a-tellin' of us to look at?'

"His Neighbour. 'Gambetter.'

"The Dull Man. 'Gam—' *oo?*'

"Neighbour (*curtly*). 'Better.'

"The Dull Man. 'Better nor *wot?*'"

It is in that mood of incredulity tempered with mild amusement that the bearers of foreign names are regarded in this country. It may be a legitimate revenge for the imbecility of those continental compositors who have systematically misprinted the name of every British minister since Pitt. But it affords a somewhat uncertain basis for the formation of historical estimates.

When one is confronted with the biography of a French minister by a French President, one feels proudly that this sort of thing could never have happened in England. The contributions of British statesmen to history are limited to their simple lives, their downright deeds, their

collected speeches on political topics of immense, but happily ephemeral importance, and (in rare cases of immense culture) of their Inaugural Address to the British Bee-Keepers' Association on "Bees in Virgil." It is the peculiar distinction of our statesmanship that it is wholly illiterate. When one says of a common man that he had made his mark, one refers to his success in life; but when one says it of a British statesman, one may be taken to allude to the substitute for his signature. There have, of course, been exceptions, trifling, it is true, but none the less humiliating to those of us who care for the simple traditions of our public life. Lord Rosebery, whose name might otherwise have been honoured equally at Epsom and in Downing Street, has persistently held the pen with a skill that is positively professional; and Mr. Asquith never forfeited more Liberal confidence than on the day when he reprinted, with ineffable frivolity, an essay on De Quincey. It is an action which would be unthinkable in a

Geddes. There are no novels by Dr. Macnamara ; there is hardly so much as a short story by Mr. Bonar Law. The scanty leisure of Mr. Walter Long, the brief repose of Sir Edward Carson, the sorely interrupted rest of Mr. Shortt is not devoted to the questionable cultivation of the Muses, those alien young persons of certainly Greek (and probably Constantinist) extraction. Viscount Grey touched the utmost permissible limit of our concession to dilettantism, when he published a work on Fly-fishing ; and the political career of Mr. Winston Churchill was seriously endangered by the popular belief that he was the real author of the works of his American namesake.

It is the British tradition that a politician may decline into literature in the same manner as he sinks into the Upper House. His Works must not be written until he is past work ; and when he has lost his memory, he is at liberty to write his memoirs. That is why one arches an insular eyebrow at the information that

M. Deschanel accepted, in the plenitude of his powers, an invitation to write the life of a deceased statesman. His country was in danger; he was actively engaged as President of the Chamber; and there were at least six hundred men in English public life who could have informed him, under the provocation offered by his strange proceeding, that there was a war on. But he was undeterred by the oddity of his own action, and this remarkable foreigner put pen to paper in order that in those weeks of victory, when the marching columns of the French infantry swung down the long white roads into the little towns of Lorraine and Alsace, his countrymen might have once more the vision of that bearded, one-eyed man who flung an arm eastward in the years of defeat to point his haunting cry, "*Regardez la trouée des Vosges.*" An Englishman who evoked such memories of the past would have been relegated to a professorship. M. Deschanel was elected President of the Republic.

Gambetta, like many Frenchmen of distinction, was not wholly free from French blood. His mother was the daughter of a country chemist in the *Midi*, and she married, a few weeks after the accession of Queen Victoria, an interesting foreigner who had come to Cahors from the Genoese Riviera in the grocery business. The bridegroom had once shipped as cabin-boy from an Italian port to Chili in a clipper, whose passenger list included a man who was to be General Garibaldi and a priest who was to be Pope Pius IX. But the experience made neither a mariner nor a *rasta* of him; and he settled amiably down to sell to the citizens of Cahors the unpleasing pottery of his native land. The prospect of a long life opened before his infant son when, at the age of four, he was given up by the doctors; and within forty years that half-Italian boy was the voice of France.

He graduated in the queer school from which the French draw their parliamentarians. After

passing through a Lycée, in which his preceptors fed him upon the windy fruits of Athenian eloquence, he became in the last decade of the Second Empire a French national, a talker in cafés, and an ornament of the Parisian Bar. It was a strange profession, in which the art of voice-production was of considerably more importance than the science of jurisprudence; and a student in search of the best models could write home without incongruity, "*Je vais au théâtre et au Palais.*" The atmosphere was eminently congenial to a bull-necked young man from *Midi*, and Gambetta attracted the favourable attention of his colleagues by a free use of imagery drawn from the Crucifixion in defence of a seditious workman. Success in this class of case went naturally hand in hand with the beginnings of a political career; and the one-eyed *avocat* with the black beard began to rank among the more conspicuous enemies of the Empire. His diapason was a not unwelcome addition to the chorus of hostility to

Napoleon III, in which the peevish *vox humana* of Jules Favre vied with the shrill ululations of Mr. Swinburne and the deeper chest notes of Victor Hugo ; until in 1868 a brief for a republican journalist brought him definitely into the centre of the stage.

A deputy named Baudin had got himself rather gratuitously shot during the *coup d'état* of 1851. For seventeen years his interrupted existence was ignored by his political sympathizers. But in the closing years of the Empire the researches of republican propagandists brought him to light as a promising excuse for the exercise of the French genius for political interments. It was unfortunately found impracticable to bury him : that had been done already. But there was yet time for a funeral oration or so ; it was not too late for a trifle of monumental masonry. A subscription was opened for the visible commemoration of this somewhat dim figure of the republican mythology ; and a brutal executive interrupted this

agreeable pastime by prosecuting one of the journalists who opened the list. Gambetta (with him, a galaxy of republican talent) appeared for the defence. Having none, he indulged in the luxury of a counter-attack. It was developed along the whole front of Imperial policy; and by the engaging procedure of the French courts, in which relevance would appear to be the sole ground for excluding evidence, he was permitted to prosecute the prosecution. The Court was bullied, the Crown was shouted down, the gallery was electrified by an advocate who was Olynthiac, Verrine, and Philippic by turns. At the fall of the curtain (surely one can hardly imagine a French trial terminated by anything less dramatic than a curtain) the applause was positively operatic; and within seven months the oracle of the Café Procope was deputy for Marseilles.

Gambetta had now achieved notoriety; and it was no longer necessary for him to conceal his intelligence. When the hot weather of

1870 sent Benedetti to Ems and the Second Empire to Sedan, it might have been expected from his past record that his contribution to the national effort would be confined to sonorous republicanism. But it was not. Like many men of mixed origin, he was intensely patriotic in the country of his adoption. In disagreement with seventeen of his political associates, he voted the war credits of the Empire; and to the last he seemed more interested in the defeat of Prussia than in the eviction of the Bonapartes: it was, for a republican politician, the supreme sacrifice of an unrivalled opportunity. The Empire went down in the sunshine of September; and in its place a young Republic confronted the elderly ravishers of the Prussian General Staff. Militarily she was as unprepared before von Moltke and von Roon as Susanna, upon a similar occasion, before her elders. But the soul and centre of her military effort, heartening Paris, ballooning over the German lines, galvanizing the peripatetic Execu-

tive at Tours, was a man of thirty-two with one eye, whom an ambitious Italian parent had put to be a fine French lawyer; and his country rewarded him with twelve years of political importance, crowned by a dictatorship.

By a pleasing irony M. Deschanel set himself to write this tale of French defeat during the years of French victory; and his performance is as interesting for students of the subject as it is for that greater number who are students of the author. If it is within the power of the President of the Republic to initiate legislation, it would not be surprising if he tabled something drastic dealing with translations from the French. One can pardon a translator unfamiliar with the habits of French classicists who fails to recognize the Olynthiac Orations when they are disguised as "*Olynthiennes*"; and only an Orientalist would complain of the translation of "*l'échec de Lang-Son*" as "Lang-Son's fiasco," when the poor thing was the name of a defeat rather than that of a general. But it is hardly

possible to forgive a travesty of M. Deschanel's emotional climax. The man lay dying, and a woman bent over him. "*Une femme le baisa au front et disparut dans l'ombre, à jamais.*" M. Deschanel has the genius for funeral oratory of all French statesmen, but his translator is sadly puzzled by the scene : "a woman," his victim is made to say to the English reader, "a woman kissed him on the forehead, and *he* vanished into the darkness for ever." The italics, as they say, are ours ; the sentiment is not M. Deschanel's ; and the theology is the translator's alone.

Gambetta was an ideal leader for a beaten country. His proclamations did not win positions ; and even the advantage that she had lost her War Office was insufficient to bring France to victory. But by his ill-shod *moblots* and his impromptu strategy he contrived through the short, black days of that snowy winter of 1871 to exorcise the temper of defeat from a defeated nation. Men have earned

immortality for less than that. It was the tragedy of the Peasants' Revolt that it was a revolution which never found its Danton, but only a handful of Héberts. It is the bitterness of the German defeat that it has not yet found its Gambetta.

M. ADOLPHE THIERS

It is perhaps something more than an affectation of Christmas to recognize in Adolphe Thiers and Camille Cavour the Brothers Cheeryble of Latin statesmanship. There is an indefinable touch of Dickens about the way in which those two little men bob up into history. They button their tight little frock-coats, adjust their ill-fitting Victorian spectacles, and proceed with invincible benevolence to save their countries, whilst they beam upon their astonishing countrymen. One is always expecting them to pay off a cruel mortgage, wipe away a tear, and leave the embarrassed hero with his blushing bride. Instead they made, to the profound disgust of the House of Hapsburg, the Kingdom of Italy, and saved, to the evident surprise of the House of Hohenzollern, the French Republic.

Of the two, Thiers probably deserved the most (as he has certainly obtained the least) reputation, by reason of the incredible range of his career. Cavour did his work in a single period between the disappointment of 1848 and the triumph of 1861. But the achievement of Thiers, which was the administration of France between 1871 and 1873, was the work of the ablest Minister of the last Government but two, and the leading historian of the last monarchy but three. He had as many careers as the Phœnix and as many farewell performances as an actor-manager. In the year 1841 he was dismissed, like M. Delcassé in 1905, as the price of European peace; in the year 1851 he was demonstrably impossible in any combination, whether the Second Republic survived or the Second Empire came into existence; in the year 1861 he was an academic old gentleman who kept a *salon* and wrote history; but in the year 1871 he was President of the Republic and deputy for twenty-six constituencies, the

embodiment of law and order, and the rising hope of the chancelleries of Europe. The Third Republic was nursed through its fractious and unfascinating infancy by a Minister of Louis-Philippe; and the little man, who had been a caller on Talleyrand, lived to share with M. Poincaré the anxious responsibility of controlling M. Clemenceau. It is an achievement unrivalled even by the dual career of Mr. Gladstone, who retired but once and was never confronted by so much as a single change of dynasty.

His *Notes et Souvenirs* from 1870 to 1873 form a vivid diary of his peace negotiations and Presidency. The Grand Tour of the neutrals began in London, where he saw Lord Granville and Mr. Gladstone. He congratulates himself that "*The Times* itself has changed its tone for the better," a temporary phase which was probably due to the leading articles of Mr. Leonard Courtney. But Thiers did not know that Delane had rebuked this improper pacifism,

and in any case British neutrality in the Franco-Prussian War was impenetrably passive. He had the intelligence to appreciate the German influence of the Court, although he was solemnly rebuked by Lord Granville as "a Minister of England" for having the indelicacy to mention it. Mr. Gladstone, who was unwilling to leave his axe at the foot of the Irish upas tree, was unmoved by the suggestion that England was missing in 1870 the opportunity which France had missed in 1866; and when Thiers emphasized this undignified abdiction of any part in continental affairs, the Prime Minister "preserved a grieved and uncomfortable silence." From London the little man proceeded to Vienna, where the Saxon Chancellor gave him a more cordial reception. Austria had been buying cavalry horses; and it was hoped that the part of armed mediator would appeal to the South German renegade whom Bismarck had broken in 1866. But unfortunately Beust, who impressed Thiers with having,

of all the men he had known, "the best air of believing what he says," was paralysed by uncertainty as to the attitude of Russia. In order to resolve his doubts, the indomitable bagman of peace proceeded to St. Petersburg. The account of his Russian visit is perhaps the most important of his revelations, because it appears to antedate by five years the genesis of the Franco-Russian alliance. It is usual to trace the first movements in this direction during or just before the war scare of 1875. But there was apparently a conversation between Thiers and Gortchakoff in the autumn of 1870, in which the Chancellor replied to an offer of the French alliance :

"We have always been promised this alliance, General Fleury spoke to us of it constantly, and we never saw it come to pass . . . however, to-day is not the moment to conclude it. Later we will take measures for uniting France with Russia ; for the moment, let us consider the

question of how to save her from the evil case in which she finds herself."

A few days later the Czar himself said :

" I should most gladly obtain such an alliance with France, an alliance for peace, not for war and conquest."

It is a new chapter in the early history of the Dual Alliance.

From Russia Thiers proceeded to Italy and embarked at Florence on a singular negotiation which was to place 100,000 Italians in the neighbourhood of Lyons, and compel the Germans by this pressure to abandon the siege of Paris. But the indefatigable, if elderly, dove was at length compelled to return to the Ark without either an olive-branch or an Italian army corps ; and France was compelled to negotiate the terms of peace with Bismarck himself. In this transaction, Thiers' principal

efforts were directed to the preservation of the *territoire de Belfort*. It is entertaining in these days of soaring interest to remark his horror of borrowing at the "usurious rate of $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent."; and the observation of Bismarck that neutral States "did not exist as far as he was concerned" is typical of a more ingenuous period of Prussian policy.

There are few things finer in European history than the exploit of this little Frenchman who set out at the age of seventy-three to find peace for his country in a tour of the neutral States. It is almost as though England were to be saved (although it is not easy to imagine from what) by Lord Halsbury. Thiers bargained with Bismarck for a treaty, swept the Commune out of Paris, hustled a royalist Assembly into a republican constitution, remade the French army, and paid off an indemnity which had shocked every financier in Europe. *Si monumentum quæris*, it is to be found in the Prussian war scare of 1875: France had been

struck down in 1870, and the alarm of her enemies within five years is the best evidence of her recovery and the noblest tribute to the work of Thiers. He was a little barrister and wrote history.

M. DE MIRABEAU

When a Prime Minister of the Third Republic writes a life of the first statesman of the Revolution, the result is probably worth reading. It is always comforting to discover that a politician can spell, and history has always been the polite recreation of public men from the Georgians to Lord Rosebery. In the intervals of his vigorous (and successful) propulsion of the Three Years Bill through the Chamber, M. Barthou descended as a pastime into the crowded and strenuous arena of Revolutionary historians: it was a highly successful excursion. It is not surprising that M. Barthou is right about the Revolution; it is impossible to become Premier in a country where every election-address begins with the *principes de 89*, without understanding the Revolution. But the

surprising success of the book is the personal study of Mirabeau : graceful biography is an unexpected accomplishment in Prime Ministers.

The combination of a distinguished author with a pre-eminent subject is irresistible. One had begun to fear that we were never to meet Danton or Mirabeau or Robespierre again ; the biographers have been so busy among the supers, and M. Le Bon had been reduced to the psychology of the Revolution (that non-existent thing). Our attention in this branch of studies has been focussed of late so exclusively upon the minnows of the Revolution that one turns with relief to a study of someone who really mattered. We have been taught so much about the architect of Lafayette's second house and the love-affairs of Danton's bookseller, that it seemed almost too much to hope for a book about one of the principals.

The history of the Riquetti family gives a foretaste of Mirabeau. Something violent and remarkable was bound to emerge from this

eccentric Provençal group. His grandfather was distinguished by the possession of a false neck in silver, a relic of the Italian wars, and his father was a strange type of that period of intellectual activity which preceded the Revolution; the *Ami des Hommes* was the friend of Quesnay the Encyclopædist, author of an Arthur Young tour in France, and possessor of advanced views on economics and provincial estates.

Gabriel Honoré Mirabeau was born in 1749, and early took the smallpox, which was the first contribution to his terrifying appearance. His education was conducted at a military school, suitably called the Pension Choquard. An unfamiliar page of his history is Mirabeau's military career; his later political action was so entirely civilian that it is surprising to find him serving impartially in the cavalry and the infantry; but certain aspects of his character must have been congenial to the dragoons. He served in the expedition to

Corsica of 1769, which recovered that island for France and prevented Napoleon from being born a British subject, enabling him to join the only arm in which Mirabeau had not served and to become Emperor of the French.

His career next passed into a picturesque atmosphere of moneylenders and *lettres de cachet;* the affairs of his heart became multifarious and absorbing; and although posterity has woven his wild oats into a civic crown, the narrative of his romances forms an undignified prelude to the National Assembly. His prisons were as numerous as Verlaine's: he visited Monte Cristo's Château d'If and Toussaint l'Ouverture's Château de Saux—the latter, a fortress in the Jura, he described picturesquely as "a nest of owls in the land of bears." He now disappears into a romantic whirl of detectives, young ladies, and indignant fathers. He fled into Switzerland and doubled back into Holland; he became a bookseller's hack in

Amsterdam, and was condemned by a Dutch court to be beheaded in effigy.

He returned to his own country to conduct a heated and personal litigation; so effective was his appearance in person that his opponent's counsel fainted in court. And through the whole of his wild adventure his literary output was maintained in a steady and highly variegated stream; the salt-marshes of Franche Comté, Despotism, the Jews, *Lettres de Cachet*, concerts in Amsterdam, and the opening of the Scheldt all provided him with subjects for rapid composition or (more often) a facile and prehensile collaboration. His genius for absorbent collaboration, which provides one of the main problems in the study of his oratory, was equalled only by the elder Dumas.

He now emerged from exile and prison into financial journalism; a visit to London brought him into contact with Shelburne, always a collector of intelligent foreigners, and Burke, and Brissot, unconscious of his destiny as a Giron-

din Premier. He went to Berlin as a "subaltern diplomatist" and wrote amusing despatches; two audiences with Frederick the Great shed a glory of reflected respectability on his growing reputation. He formed a friendship with the enlightened Duke of Brunswick, whose insane proclamation was to precipitate the September Massacres; collaboration with a painstaking German officer produced a monumental work on Prussia, and Mirabeau contemplated settling down in a book-selling business in Kiel eight years before Napoleon prepared to take service in the Turkish artillery. If the world had seen "*Mirabeau, Buchhandlung*" and Bonaparte Pasha, it would have lost half the Revolution and all the Empire.

His career now became the history of the Revolution; the Deputy for the *Tiers* of Aix, with his mass of hair and team of little Swiss secretaries, was a figure of European significance. The desperate attempt to preserve the

King and Queen, his "wards," the statesmanship of his Notes to the Court, the tragedy of his struggle against the suspicion of purchase, and the supreme apotheosis of his death swept him into history; and in history one leaves him.

GENERAL WALKER

It is always delightful, as Pygmalion discovered, to meet a piece of art that has come to life. An omnibus interior after Barry Pain or a War Cabinet by Gilbert and Sullivan is as attractive as the Rossetti goitre or the Beardsley lip. But there can be few encounters more charming than the discovery (in a most interesting work by a learned man who professes Economics and Sociology in the Louisiana State University) of a perfect Conrad. One has, as one meets him, a lazy sense of fireflies and a *chaise longue* in the tropics; there is an air of wise First Mates and Borneo cigars, and the comfortable feeling that we shall be told all about him by Captain Marlow, in thirty-six hours or so. It will be a story of sea-beaches in a hot climate, in which

men of parts will muster incredible resources of gravity and introspection in order to do buccaneering things of the utmost simplicity. It will, in fact, have more than a little the air of a charade performance of *Treasure Island*, played by a cast of distinguished, but dissatisfied, philosophers. That is why I said that the career of Mr. Walker as a pirate was a perfect Conrad.

It is the peculiar distinction of William Walker that there stands in the chief square of the capital of Costa Rica, whose name escapes me, an elegant figure of a young lady trampling him in effigy. To few men, unless indeed they chance to be the personal friends of sculptors (a limited class), does such an honour fall. It came to Walker because he followed, with the full energy of a man born in Nashville, Tennessee, the high calling of a filibuster. He was the son of an insurance manager; and he became almost mechanically a pirate. He graduated at the University of Nashville, where the curri-

culum included "algebra, geometry, trigonometry, descriptive and analytical geometry, conic sections, calculus, mensuration, surveying, navigation, mechanics, astronomy, chemistry, mineralogy, geology, experimental philosophy, natural history, Roman and Grecian antiquities, Greek and Latin classics, rhetoric and belles-lettres, history, mental and moral philosophy, logic, political economy, international and constitutional law, composition, criticism, and oratory, natural theology, Christian evidences, and the Bible." Any student of the works of Mr. Conrad will know that for a man of such accomplishments there was no opening elsewhere than under the black flag.

Walker's *floruit* as a filibuster was about the year 1850. There is, at first sight, something faintly disconcerting in the occurrence of Filibuster Brown as a national character at a time when most people looked like daguerrotypes and sounded like Emerson. His career against

the regular background of American life in the Fifties has the effect of the tramp of smugglers and a strong smell of French brandy in a cellar under one of Miss Austen's parlours. One seems to be sitting on the horsehair of an early drawing-room by Mr. Henry James, whilst odd men in ear-rings insist on counting doubloons (or is it pistoles ?) in the next room. That is the charm, although it was not felt by his contemporaries, of William Walker. His beginnings were as docile as his contemporary background. Having graduated in the numerous accomplishments of the University of Nashville, he studied medicine and became an M.D. of the University of Pennsylvania. Then, embodying in himself the combined educational ideals of Mr. H. G. Wells and Mr. A. C. Benson, he moved on to the easy slope that led to piracy and was admitted to the Bar in New Orleans. Now the law of Louisiana is known to be founded principally upon the *Code Napoléon ;* and the sinister career of William Walker neatly illustrates

the disastrous influence of codification on the character of one who, under a happier system of jurisprudence, might have become one of our most respected jurists.

The rake's progress through the professions continued; and in the year 1848, when the European market for revolutionaries was rising sharply, Walker sank a stage lower and began to write for the Press. He even edited a paper called *The Crescent*, which so far diverged from the ideals of its title as to wane rather than to wax; and he prosecuted a remarkable love affair with a young lady who was congenitally deaf. It has been frequently observed that love is blind; but its deprivation of the other senses is a less usual phenomenon. The idyll of William Walker should be told with the stern pathos of Dr. Scroggs's narrative:

"To his many other accomplishments Walker now added the sign language of deaf mutes and

proceeded to press his suit. One story has it that his love was not returned; another, that his affection was reciprocated, but that a misunderstanding caused an estrangement; and still another, that they were happy in their love and had actually fixed the date for the wedding. It matters little which of these statements is true, for the outcome, so far as Walker was concerned, was the same. The city was scourged by one of its visitations of yellow fever, and Helen Martin was an early victim."

That is the supreme, the Conrad touch.

One is now at the brink of the period in which Walker filiburst (if that is the appropriate aorist). After an uneventful residence in San Francisco, in which he failed to induce the authorities to do anything more stimulating than imprison him for contempt of court, he brought an astonishing suit of clothes and crossed the Mexican frontier. An American

traveller who met him at Guaymas brought back an indelible impression of his appearance :

" His head was surmounted by a huge white fur hat, whose long knap waved with the breeze, which, together with a very ill-made, short-waisted blue coat, with gilt buttons, and a pair of grey, shapeless pantaloons, made up the ensemble of as unprepossessing-looking a person as one would meet in a day's walk."

Having acquired the pirate's make-up, Walker cast round for the remainder of the outfit. He returned to San Francisco and placed on the market a number of bonds of the Republic of Sonora, which did not exist. He further loaded a brig with ammunition and camp equipment ; and when the authorities seized it, he recovered the vessel in replevin and sued the military for trespass. It is not for nothing that members of the Bar take to piracy. Then, with the impressive rank of Colonel of the Independence

Regiment, he sailed for Sonora. As a beginning he captured the Governor of La Paz and created in a three-line proclamation the Republic of Lower California, which was at once endowed by this far-sighted practitioner with the only system of jurisprudence with which he was personally familiar, the Civil Code and the Code of Practice of the State of Louisiana. Narrow critics have believed that his motive was a desire to import the Louisianian institution of slavery. But it must be obvious that his ruling anxiety was strictly professional: he was determined that, on his elevation to the South Californian bench, he should be decently familiar with the law which he would have to administer. For the moment, however, he preferred the executive to the judicature; and he became President of the new republic, whilst the *opéra bouffe* capture of another Mexican Governor was effected, and American sympathizers opened a recruiting-office at the corner of Sacramento Street, San Francisco. The

pleasant climate favouring the growth of tropical republics, he proceeded shortly to fulminate, in a further body of proclamations, the Republic of Sonora. Then his supporters failed him; and, after a gentle cavalry action with a Mexican patrol, he surrendered to the United States authorities on an undertaking to stand trial in San Francisco for violating the neutrality laws. Filibustering now seems to have entered on a period of litigation that must have warmed Walker's professional heart. Captains, majors, surgeons, Mexican consuls, and even Walker's Secretary of State passed through the dock in rapid succession. Meanwhile the ports of the Pacific Slope pullulated with war material, and the oddest people sailed for Mexico to interrupt the eternal repose of the Latin races with the methodical genius for efficiency and self-government of the Anglo-Saxon.

Each of Walker's ventures was conducted on the model of his first effort. An invitation to Nicaragua was followed by an expedition to

Granada. Here Walker's old professional habits reasserted themselves; this time, instead of importing his own Code, he started a newspaper. There was a succession of executions and a war with Costa Rica. Then, in a confused way, Wall Street came in. The reigning Vanderbilt, who was hostile to the filibuster republic, got control of a shipping company and tried to cut Walker's communications with the United States; and the course of events became almost invisible behind that whirl of litigation and "bear raids" which is the native air of the American financier. Walker, who had now become President of Nicaragua, endeavoured to accredit a Minister to the Court of St. James's; he was an old gentleman with a long grey beard, which he had vowed never to shave until the Spanish evacuated Cuba. But in spite of this tonsorial distinction His Excellency never presented his credentials in Downing Street. Walker was next threatened by a *triplice* of Guatemala,

Honduras, and San Salvador, which rang down the Wilhelmstrasse and echoed across the Ballplatz and resounded along the Quai d'Orsay. If universal unpopularity was the test of universal empire, his Napoleonic isolation qualified Walker for a pedestal inscribed *Gulielmus Perambulator, Imperator Omnium Americarum.* Costa Rica (how one remembers the reverberation of it in the Chancelleries of the world) came in; and the filibuster experiment closed after an exciting campaign over ground which is principally familiar to philatelists. A second venture in Nicaragua and a descent on Honduras terminated his activity. Like the other Man of Destiny, he surrendered to the captain of a British warship. But the *Icarus* (it may have been due to some flaw in the mythology) was less hospitable than the *Bellerophon;* and Walker was handed over to the ungrateful people of Honduras. They shot him without hesitation in the angle of a wall outside Truxillo; and a gentleman on *Harper's Weekly*

compared the United States Government's discouragement of his operations to the attitude of the Church of England towards Knox, Whitefield, and Wesley. You will have noticed the resemblance.

KING ALFRED

THE trouble about King Alfred has always been one's complete inability to distinguish him from King Arthur and Prince Albert. It may be because Count Gleichen once made a statue of him; or because he was (to say the least of it) a good man. But anyway the discreditable fact remains that I have never been quite sure whether he married Guinevere or Queen Victoria. It is a confusion that historians have done little to correct; because the need of a paragon in early history, which drove the Roman poets to the doctrine of the Golden Age, has been satisfied in the case of Alfred by the creation of a mythical monarch with many of the gifts of Napoleon and most of the qualities of Abraham Lincoln. The unfortunate king has become oppressed with the intolerable

burden of his virtues; and he is by this time so many-sided as to be almost completely invisible from any point of view. It has resulted that a bewildered posterity, finding itself debarred from any appreciation of a most interesting military and political career during the Danish invasion of England, has clung convulsively to the glorious circumstance that King Alfred defied the proverb by burning his cake at both ends and eating it too. It is an inadequate record of a busy life.

If Alfred had been a Frenchman, he would have had at least three standard and classical biographies; and if he had been a German, the All-Highest House would have founded a university for the exclusive study of Its illustrious ancestor. As it is, the English bibliography of the first great King of England is almost as large as that of a minor Napoleonic Marshal. Anglo-Saxon reticence may sometimes be carried too far. But it is ungracious to complain that the business of writing a

definite text-book upon Alfred has been so long delayed, when the result is so completely satisfactory. His latest biographer follows the texts closely ; but she is not so acutely afflicted with the Anglo-Saxon attitude as most Oxford historians, who tend to degenerate on the slightest provocation into Freemanesque maunderings about *Eorlings* and *Ceorlings*. It is true that in a moment of weakness she refers to the King as *Engelondes deorling*, a phrase immortalized, with slightly better spelling, by the late Poet Laureate. But apart from an occasional lapse into the ridiculous vernacular of her ancestors, she has put the story of Alfred into a clear, scholarly, and accurate volume. The only inadequate thing in the book is a map, which serves to reduce the reader to a state of geographical ignorance almost equal to that of the great Saxon strategist himself.

The true history of Alfred, Ethelwulf's son, is the record of a painstaking, Teutonic fighting

man, who was incidentally the father of his country. Alfred was not an inspired soldier; but he possessed the supreme military virtue of willingness to be taught by the enemy. He was hardly the founder of the British navy; although he has become the eponymous saint of the Blue Water School on the strength of a number of vessels of peculiar design, and a fortunate gale which arrived before the king had completed his building programme and sent, according to the Chronicle, one hundred and forty enemy ships "to the devils." And, above all, he was not the indifferent pastry-cook of popular myth or the queer mystical figure of the interpolations to Asser, with his mysterious prayers and diseases and a general flavour of the late Middle Ages or the early Nineties. But he was just a careful man of moderate ability, with a strong interest in the welfare of his subjects and a mild taste for science and literature. King Alfred was really rather like Prince Albert after all.

Of his youth and education there is little to say. Some may regret that history does not permit him to display the indecent precocity of the copybook, but rather the juvenile imbecility of true greatness. But the deficiencies of his early training enabled him to display in later years a quiet determination to acquire the learning that he had missed in boyhood, which almost equals Cato's intellectual heroism when he learned Greek greybearded. His importance to England begins in the year 868 with his appointment as *Secundarius* to his brother the king. Three years later in the *Année Terrible* of the Saxon kingdom Alfred's trial opened. Reading was seized by the Danes; and the failure of a Saxon attack upon their entrenchments illustrated the value of prepared positions and taught Alfred the first of his lessons in Danish methods of warfare. That singular people was in the habit of approaching a country in its ships, digging itself in, and making great cavalry raids on stolen horses from the shelter

of its entrenched camp. It would appear that the Vikings were the original Horse Marines. The lessons of the Danish wars, like those of the American Civil War, were "spades and mounted infantry." Alfred learned them, and retired to Athelney to organize the national resistance.

When he emerged from his retreat, "and his people was fain of him," he swept the Northmen back into the north-east in the campaign of Ethandun. As the king moved out of Athelney on Brixton Deverill, the levies of Somerset, Wiltshire, and part of Hampshire moved up like the concentrating units of a modern army. On the very next day he moved his forces with Prussian rapidity upon Leigh, and then to the battlefield of Ethandun. The Danes collapsed before his complete and punctual concentration. This was something more than a laborious imitation of Danish nobility: it was a brilliant employment of punctuality and organization, factors that had been forgotten in European

warfare since the hollow square of the Roman Empire went down before the Dervish rush of the Barbarians.

Alfred employed his years of peace in careful organization. The army was organized in two relays like Nehemiah's wall-builders; the creation of Burhs applied a system of barbed wire and blockhouses to the restriction of the movements of a mobile enemy; and an increase in the number of Thanes substituted a professional soldiery for the heroic but incompetent amateurs of the earlier Saxon wars. After a second interval of war, Alfred proceeded with the organization of peace; Wessex was systematically divided into shires, and a collection of laws embodied all that was respectable in the earlier codes. The king himself exhibited an intense interest in the science of geography and a straightforward desire to supply his country by education with "men of prayer, men of war, and men of work." His literary career, for which his biographers appear to feel

a somewhat exaggerated respect, consists for the most part of a blameless course of translations of improving works. Alfred had lived with a purpose, and fought with a purpose; and it was perhaps inevitable that he should write with a purpose.

KING JOHN

SEVEN hundred years ago, on a hot morning in the Thames valley, King John set seal to a Latin document of sixty clauses. It is a scene which has impressed imaginations as far apart as the Earl of Halsbury and the late Madame Tussaud ; and the occasion possesses an interest beyond the theatrical value inherent in any meeting of persons in full armour so near to Waterloo Station. The banality of most anniversaries finds appropriate expression in the vulgarity of most monuments. But Magna Carta is perhaps entitled to more respectful treatment. The document itself, although it has been belittled by the sinister combination of a Frenchman, a Scotchman, and a learned lady, is at least as important as any other that is honoured with an anniversary. If President

Wilson was entitled to indicate by fireworks his satisfaction at the exclusion from the Eastern States of the authority of George III, there seems no reason why the Church of England should not celebrate by bonfires, if it feels inclined, its liberty to elect Bishops without the interference of King John.

The anniversary of Magna Carta shares with all other events before the Eighteenth Century the peculiar charm that we celebrate it, by reason of a change in the calendar, on the wrong day. In any case it should be remembered that we are not asked to make it an annual celebration, but only a centenary. And centenaries come but once a century.

Perhaps the foremost interest of the anniversary does not lie in the event itself, but in the chain of centenary years which lie between any modern June and the June when the Great Charter was signed. In 1315 no one had heard of it; and in 1415 men were more interested in the precarious situation of an Expeditionary

Force in France, commanded by Henry V, which four months later cut its way through to the victory of Agincourt. In 1515 supercilious devotees of the New Learning regarded King John's barons as savages; but in 1615 those London lawyers, who were later to make the English Revolution, respected in an age of absolute monarchy the charter of personal liberty. In 1715 England was still debating the question whether the Treaties of Utrecht were an honourable peace and wishing that King George I would learn just a little English; and in 1815 King John was eclipsed by the news that the English army was in Flanders and Napoleon was on the Sambre.

There is perhaps a malicious appropriateness that in 1915, when the centenary of Waterloo could only be celebrated on the spot by the Prussians, the anniversary of Magna Carta should have come round under the genial provisions of the Defence of the Realm Act. If any of our Major-Generals had heard of Stephen

Langton, there can be little doubt that Runnymede would have been a prohibited area.

The proceedings of that June day, in "the meadow which is called Runingmede between Windelesore and Stanes," were in themselves a profoundly unimportant negotiation which appeared to terminate a singularly unimpressive rebellion. The noblemen of England had expressed their objection to compulsory military service in the French war by appearing in arms against the King. He was an unpleasant man and a good sportsman, who died four years later of an inability to assimilate peaches and new cider in the atmosphere of Newark. He had shown a certain resource in condemning an archdeacon to death by the pressure of an enormous leaden mitre; and his receipt of the news of the death of his First Minister with the observation, "Tell him to go to hell," exhibited a gift of limited but powerful repartee. On the present occasion he had travelled from Wiltshire by way of Oxford to interview the "Army

of God and Holy Church." Since he noticed that it considerably outnumbered his own forces, he signed Magna Carta.

By reason either of the unique circumstance that the party of reform was led by the Archbishop of Canterbury, or of the simple fact that English politicians are unfamiliar with the Latin language, the edict of King John has become the charter of English liberties. It is a splendid legacy, which would surprise no one more than the testator. English jurists have chosen to see in the thirty-ninth article of Magna Carta the right of all Englishmen to trial by twelve of their countrymen:

"*Nullus liber homo capiatur vel imprisonetur . . . nisi per legale judicium parium suorum vel per legem terrae.*"

The Latin is sufficiently British to enshrine the Anglo-Saxon right of trial by jury; but whether King John contemplated this wide

interpretation is a question that only his late majesty can answer. His surprise at his elevation to the ranks of the Fathers of the Constitution must be almost greater than that of his new neighbours. That, at any rate, is the clause which the King accepted at the suggestion of two Archbishops, seven Bishops, a Papal Legate, and sixteen Barons ; and it is upon that democratic barricade that Lords Halsbury and Parmoor were prepared to fall in the cause of personal liberty and the name of Stephen Langton.

By the consent of eighteen generations of Englishmen, Magna Carta is one of the central documents of English history. But whereas the Grand Remonstrance was drafted by men who intended to remonstrate, and the Bill of Rights was a conscious attempt to pass the right into law, the chief contribution of Magna Carta to English law was the unintentional aberration of an absent-minded king. Magna Carta was an unpremeditated achievement, comparable

to Simon de Montford's, who looked once for a party-meeting and discovered the Parliament of the Three Estates, or to the somnambulist statesmanship of those men of the Eighteenth Century, who went out in search of an export trade and found an Empire.

KING HAL

They say that in the Fifteenth Century the Middle Age went mad and shocked itself before it died. The grey austerity of the Gothic, in which six generations of men had glorified God by the chill, slim magnificence of their tall cathedrals, writhed into the rococo convolutions of the Flamboyant manner, until it blossomed into that strange flower of mediæval decadence, the Sainte Chapelle. Manners took on that air of conscious archaism which always marks the end of an age. Priests became more priestly, maidens faltered more maidenly, and knights bore themselves more knightly than they had ever been seen in the real world of priests, knights, and maidens; and the whole generation clung to the ways of its fathers with the desperation of men who see clearly that their

sons will take a different road. It is not surprising that there was born into this world of deliberate mediævalism and self-conscious chivalry a king whose whole career typified to the point of travesty the royal life of the Middle Ages. Henry V, in whom a hasty posterity has been sometimes over-apt to see a handy summary of the mediæval monarchs, was in reality an ingenious reconstruction of his predecessors in the heroic age. But then posterity, poor dear, is so American: she *loves* epitomes, and the temptation to take Henry II, Edward III, Philip Augustus, and several Dukes of Burgundy all in one by getting up King Henry V has proved too strong for her. He is, to say truth, a somewhat dubious antique. One feels all the time that he has been subjected to a drastic process of restoration. The colours have been heightened and the wormholes have been deepened. His chivalry was so much more chivalrous, his Round Table so infinitely rounder, and his castles so far more castellated than the

real thing, that one may walk admiringly round him as though he were a mediæval masterpiece of that art of architectural reconstruction with which the ingenious M. Viollet-le-Duc delighted the contemporaries of Napoleon III.

This king, if one may adopt the language of the sale-room, was Sheraton at best; and his misfortune is that he is generally sold as Chippendale. But his career, if one is free from these antiquarian scruples, forms an excellent subject for biography. After all, he lived a long time ago. 1415 was not the day before yesterday, even if it was not at the heart of the Middle Ages. Knights were very sufficiently bold then, in spite of the disturbing element introduced into the gentlemanly pastime of war by the grimy innovation of artillery; and one may make his career the foundation of an interesting piece of mediæval history. One begins with a fine confused picture of England when Henry IV was engaged in making it, and his aristocracy was (like Penelope) unmaking it when his back

was turned. One passes to the Shakesperean controversy as to the reality or otherwise of Prince Henry's wild oats: this is where one gets one's possibilities of comic relief, whilst mild-eyed historians titter like maiden aunts over the naughtiness of princes. When one gets Henry on the throne, the narrative takes on a broader sweep and becomes co-extensive with the course of Anglo-French history between 1413 and 1422.

Prince Hal (one falls inevitably into the dialect) had a birthplace, which was one of those periodical concessions which the British monarchy makes to Welsh susceptibilities. He was born at Monmouth on the Welsh border, in one of the fortresses which had been erected by English civilization to dam back the eastward-setting tide of Celtic barbarism; and it does infinite credit to the rapacity of Welsh tradition that he has been greeted, in these circumstances, as a Welsh hero. Early, perhaps too early, he went to Oxford; since the age of eleven seems

unduly tender for an undergraduate, even after one has made allowance for the morbid precocity invariably displayed by heirs to the British throne. But as his residence was limited to a period of six months, the Oxford influence on his formation was of the slightest; and time was even wanting for the resident preceptors to proclaim those indications of exceptional ability, which they have never failed to detect in the sons of the very great. The remainder of his education (it was conducted in a Bishop's house, and the school-bills included eightpennyworth of harp-strings, a fourpenny work on grammar, and a new scabbard) would appear to have been confined to instruction in the local colour of the Middle Ages.

His real training began when his father sent him to govern the Crown Colony of Wales. Owen Glendower, who was (like most national heroes, from Pym to Robespierre) a lawyer, had raised the country behind the English garrison. He possessed the rare accomplish-

ment of causing snow in August; and his Welsh *guerilleros* enjoyed the more substantial assistance of the French, who operated from the coast, and exhibited in the interest of the Welsh that burning sympathy with small nationalities which is always experienced by the enemies of large nations. This war, and the succeeding period of feudal confusion which resulted in the elimination of the Percies from the governing class, provided Prince Henry with his education in military statesmanship; and when he inherited the throne, he took with avidity to that recognized form of sport, a war with the French, which provided the Kings of England with an appropriate and dignified pastime before the public-spirited institution of Newmarket Heath by King Charles II as a substitute.

If his biographers have a fault, it is that they are a trifle inclined, as military historians, to exaggerate the intelligence of mediæval warfare. Strategy in the Middle Ages was an affair of mere collision. If a malicious fate brought the

vaguely roaming armies in contact, there was a battle, and the ingenuity of generations of historians would be exercised in attributing to the respective commanders a depth and a precision of military design of which they were profoundly innocent. If, however, the collision was averted by some stroke of luck or loot, there was no battle, and the campaign is reduced in the text-books to the rank of a mere raid. The exercise of writing military history upon these terms is an entertaining one; and as it has brought merited fame, ennoblement, and a seat in the House of Commons to Sir Charles Oman, we must not deny to young historians this opportunity to place their foot upon the first rung of the professional ladder.

With the historical problem presented by Prince Henry as *viveur* his biographers are even more satisfactory than when they attempt an apology for his persecution of the Lollards. One finds it somehow difficult to see this cross between Haroun-al-Raschid and St. Louis presid-

ing at the burning of the heretic Badby; and the fact that the prince interrupted the *auto-da-fé* in order to offer to a half-charred man a pension of one and ninepence a week for the sale of his soul cannot leave as favourable an impression on all minds as it has on that of an Oxford historian. But the soul of Oxford is sometimes above souls.

KING FREDERICK THE GREAT

SOMEWHERE in the Canon or Apocrypha of Mr. H. G. Wells there are some assorted reflections which might be profitably digested by nearly all historians, as well as by those exceptional and gifted critics of literature who can read as well as write. They deal, in that staccato intellectual shorthand which enables Mr. Wells to keep more balls in the air at one time than any other contemporary conjurer, with what poor Boon called "the creation of countervailing reputations," that queer habit of competitive panegyric to which we owe the strongly Napoleonic flavour of the Hindenburg legend, the Stevensonian glories of Sir James Barrie, and the Gladstonian prestige of Mr. Asquith:

"The Western world ripe for Great Men in

the early nineteenth century. The Germans as a highly competitive and envious people take the lead. The inflation of Schiller. The greatness of Goethe. . . . Resolve of the Germans to have a Great Fleet, a Great Empire, a Great Man. Difficulty in finding a suitable German for Greatening. Expansion of the Goethe legend. German efficiency brought to bear on the task. Lectures, Professors. Goethe compared to Shakespeare. Compared to Homer. Compared to Christ. Compared to God. Discovered to be incomparable. . . .

"Stimulation of Scotch activities. . . . The discovery that Burns was as great as Shakespeare. Greater. The booming of Sir Walter Scott. Wake up, England! . . . Victorian age sets up as a rival to the Augustan. . . . Tennyson as Virgil. . . .

"Longfellow essentially an American repartee. . . ."

The theory is not so wildly improbable as Mr.

Wells's cheerful advocacy might lead an elderly intelligence to believe. Many a sound doctrine has failed to find acceptance because its nervous parent left it on the workhouse steps, or conquered a natural diffidence by launching it upon the world with the defiant air of one about to pull the neighbours' bells and run away. But a solemn world must not be misled by the tone of truculent originality assumed by the author of *The Natural History of Greatness* into dismissing his views with that smile which marks the incurable frivolity of really serious people. Because the truth is sometimes quite amusing, too.

The historian's gallery is full of examples of such competitive imitation. Sometimes the competitor is the man himself; and in such cases he merely presents the spectacle, familiar to fabulists, of the frog stimulated to feats of abnormal distension by the more generous contours of the bull. The eyeglass of Mr. Austen Chamberlain and the consciously Napo-

leonic gestures of most ordinary persons at any crisis in the history of their bank, administration, or trade union are all instances, more or less distressing, of the same habit of imitation.

But its more sinister manifestations are those upon which Mr. Wells has put the unerring finger of the late Boon. These are the cases in which the imitative colouring is deliberately superimposed by a third party as a conscious set-off to some existing reputation. The trick springs partly from that base commercialism which is for ever thrusting one thing upon us, whilst pretending all the time that it is something else. It has poisoned the pure streams of historical and literary criticism, like a chemical works fouling a fishery; and even the clear spring of geography, that virgin science dwelling alone among the watersheds and wooed only by the geometrical embraces of Mr. Belloc, has hardly escaped the vile infection. The habit of mind which can bring men to speak of the Cornish Riviera, the Saxon Switzerland, and the

Manchester of France is an unpleasant evidence of the same device which leads them to describe Mr. Robert W. Service as the Canadian Kipling and may yet encourage them to stigmatize Mr. Kipling as the British D'Annunzio.

One of the most striking instances of this distressing form of propaganda is the organized effort made over a number of years by large portions of the population of North Germany to establish King Frederick the Great as a sort of Prussian repartee to the reputation of the Emperor Napoleon. The history of the Seven Years' War was conscientiously ransacked for parallels to every incident in the Napoleonic mythology. If the Emperor was obstructed by an irreverent sentry, the King of Prussia must needs have been defied by a disrespectful miller. If the Imperial cavalry was habitually commanded by Murat in the most preposterous headgear, Ziethen's hussar cap is dutifully magnified to more than Neapolitan proportions by those patriotic historians who have entered

their royal master for this exacting competition with the Corsican ogre. Napoleon's correspondence was published by a Bonaparte in thirty-two volumes : a whole dynasty of Hohenzollerns promptly countered with the re-issue of Frederick's in thirty-six. The Frederician *tricorne* was given a Napoleonic tilt ; and illustrators, who caught him with a royal hand on the shoulders of a Pomeranian grenadier, set his fingers groping Napoleonically upwards for the lobe of his *grognard's* ear. And so the game went on. If Napoleon had taken (which he did not) the faintest interest in the port of Kiel, the *Preussische Jahrbücher* would doubtless have restored the balance by laying down two Kiels to one. And one positively wonders that no enterprising graduate of the University of Berlin ever managed to catch him sleeping before the battle of Rossbach or marooned him for a short time on an Elba in the Baltic.

But the significance of Frederick is not in the least that he was Napoleonic, which he was not.

This lean-faced, elegant little atheist, who swung a censer before the altar of Voltaire and received extensive presents of *rococo* clocks from the Pompadour, was typically a figure of the Eighteenth Century. He belongs essentially to that period of deportment, in which the occupation of the statesman was closely allied to the still higher calling of the dancing-master, and the differences of nations were adjusted by certain formal movements of small professional armies resembling almost equally the square dances of the ballroom and the gentlemanly exercises of the duelling-ground. That is why the point of him is so completely missed in any attempt to run his career into the larger mould of the post-Revolutionary era, when governments said what they meant with the most indelicate emphasis, and whole nations were locked in strikingly inelegant struggles for their existence.

The value of this little figure of Frederick as a summary of the whole tone of his century was

debated and (at considerable length) exploited by Carlyle, whose writings are avoided by the present generation, which cannot read Scotsmen, under the false pretence that he was really a German. The great tapestry into which he angrily wove that period, in which the continent of Europe was converted into a large drawing-room, is one of the soundest and most elaborate pieces of historical research and description ever made.

Just as philosophy is the study of other people's misconceptions, so history is the study of other people's mistakes. They are mostly the mistakes of historians, who in their habit of erring are almost human. There is a popular error with an increasing circle of popularity to the effect that the Eighteenth Century was a barren period. It is typical of the Victorian snobbery of the Nineteenth Century that it denied its own father because he looked like a walking gentleman in a costume-play. The illusion of futility was fostered by the circum-

stance that the Eighteenth Century dressed lamentably well and had deplorably good manners. It was assumed by solemn gentlemen in black coats that a generation which could furnish its rooms could not conceivably furnish its mind; and we were given to understand that the century of the three Georges was passed in a genial blend of alcoholism and deportment. It is an unfortunate impression, because that century laid the foundation of modern England. It may have laid them a little gaily, between minuets; but, however light-minded its recreations may have been, it undoubtedly laid them. Industrialism, economics, and political Radicalism were all produced by the age of the six-bottle men; and the honest historian is bound to admit that everything that is modern is eighteenth-century, just as the honest furniture dealer is driven by his conscience to confess that nearly everything that is eighteenth-century is modern.

The period which was pregnant with the

American Republic and the French Revolution produced the most modern of all the seven plagues of Europe, the temper of Prussia. The Eighteenth Century was the school of all diplomacy; but above all it was the nursery of Prussian diplomacy. In the month of August 1914, when several Prussians were detected in public untruth, English opinion was directed in its search for precedents to the writings of an academic person named Treitschke and a commander of cavalry named Bernhardi. Since the people of England had been seized with an unusual desire to read something about foreigners, it was perhaps fortunate that the works of these writers were available in English translations. But it was hardly the proper place to look for the origins of Prussian policy, because you do not find the roots of a tree amongst its higher branches. It is not so long since Prussian history began; and there are present in the beginnings of Prussian history all the elements which have recently

become familiar. It was the discovery of Horace that there were heroes before Agamemnon; and it remains for some English historian still unborn to reveal to our posterity that there were Germans before Bismarck. Before Nietzsche and Treitschke there was Frederick the Great. He ruled Prussia for half a century, and in a series of three wars he made that country one of the great Powers of Europe. His diplomacy was frankly mendacious; and when in the first year of his reign he got his first opportunity of violating the peace of Europe, he took it in twenty-seven days. It is possibly more instructive to study the proceedings of the greatest King of Prussia than to read the lectures of the innumerable gentlemen of the same nationality who have conceived it to be the duty of a professor to teach the young idea how to shoot upon insufficient provocation.

The whole world outside the charmed circle of Copenhagen and Amsterdam was busily engaged for five years in demonstrating that

there is nothing original in Germany except its original sin. The exercise was enjoyable, and since England has always appreciated destructive criticism as a legitimate form of sport, it was extremely popular. Exhuming Goethe was almost as entertaining as killing Keats. It was delightful to observe the antics of philosophers shunning the feet of innumerable Gamaliels; and the musicians have grown as suspicious of their old masters as picture dealers. A Major-General even hinted that the 42-centimetre howitzer was an Austrian invention; and the great Germans all became Swedes or Swiss. But there is one invention to which the Prussian claim has never been denied, and that is the peculiar blend of legitimate ambition with illegitimate methods which is known as *Realpolitik*. The original specification is probably to be found among the papers of an Italian author of quotations named Macchiavelli. Professor Chamberlain, whose popularity has somewhat unaccountably waned in this country,

has probably demonstrated that this so-called Florentine had a thick neck and butter-coloured hair; perhaps his Tuscan was a shade guttural. At any rate, even if Macchiavelli was not himself of pronouncedly Teutonic type, his ingenious invention has received in North Germany such substantial additions that it has definitely become a Prussian patent. Frederick or Bismarck could probably defend with complete success any patent action that the misguided Italian might bring against them. *Realpolitik* is in reality the diplomacy of the Eighteenth Century; it belongs to the period before nationalism had arisen to prohibit partitions, and when preventive wars were the common exercise of nations. Modern diplomacy is a good way behind its times. Among Englishmen it has just reached the vague nationalism which pervaded Europe between 1848 and the collapse of the Second Empire; but in Prussia it belongs purely to the Eighteenth Century. The invasion of Belgium was purely Frederi-

cian; the Turkish alliance was the normal expedient of the ministers of Louis XV; and Dr. von Bethmann-Hollweg could have opened his heart to Kaunitz.

Prussian policy entered European history with the suddenness of a bad fairy in the late autumn of 1740, when Frederick became King of Prussia. That young man ascended the throne with the most sinister of all reputations, a name for bad verse. Politically he appeared to be an enlightened pacifist with a strong moral bias against Macchiavelli. But promotion, which was powerless to improve his verse, debased his morals; and in the first year of his reign, within four weeks of his first opportunity, he committed a European crime. He invaded Silesia in direct contravention of the written guarantee of his Government. Since he was a humorist and had excellent manners, he offered to protect his victim against any other criminal whom she might meet; and for the next forty-six years Prussian policy was conducted on the

lines laid down by the best contemporary highwayman. Various coaches were stopped with assistance of various allies, and it was occasionally convenient to turn king's evidence. An English writer has referred to his "royal Larkinism"; but he was surely confusing Mr. James Larkin with Mr. Richard Turpin.

The *amateur* of Frederick will find little to revise in his old Carlylean impression of the European scene and the Prussian actors in it. Once more, as in the more familiar case of Gibbon, the imagination of genius would appear to have anticipated the conclusions of research; and the utmost that industrious young men can achieve to-day in the archives of Berlin and Vienna is to confirm the conjectures of an irritable old man in Chelsea in the early Sixties. Perhaps one of them will one day produce a study of Frederick William I, the Philip of this *rococo* Alexander, whose achievement in the direction of Prussian policy and the construction of a Prussian army was infinitely more

valuable than the more advertised career of his predecessor, the Great Elector, and was at least as important for Germany and Europe as the work which Frederick himself was enabled to do on the foundations that his father had laid.

But one is always glad to read books about Frederick, if only for the memories which they revive. There are some books which set a man groping blindly up the dusty corridors of his intellectual past ; and with the belated study of a life of Frederick the Great one almost recovers —it is a gorgeous sensation—the fine frenzy of the Early Days, of those autumn evenings in 1914 when one used to read the *communiqués* (how strange the word looked !) of a Mr. F. E. Smith not yet ennobled, upon the operations of a Sir John French not yet enshrined. In those days the country, which had embarked in August on a war of honour and policy, found itself by the exigencies of the autumn publishing season engaged in a war of ideas ; and the

pens of England were levelled in a thin, black line at the oncoming squadrons of iniquity led by the sinister trinity of Nietzsche, Treitschke, and Bernhardi. Someone even made quite a lot of money by blandly republishing those chapters of *The Decline and Fall* which relate to the unsuccessful enterprise of Attila; and the public intelligence was rotten-ripe to receive revelations of the cynical depravity of Frederick the Great. But none came.

It was notorious to any leader-writer with the strength to quote Macaulay's essay that he had invaded Silesia without extenuating circumstances (the foolish man did not even realize the mining prospects of the region); and it was very generally felt that he was in some way the father of the Prussian evil, in spite of the distressing fact that British policy had rendered every assistance to this disreputable paternity. Yet nervous propagandists quailed before the backs of Carlyle's six (or, in some editions, eight) volumes, and the

Iliad of Frederician naughtiness remained unsung.

But it is an unfortunate irony that has delayed the publication of any new biography of Frederick until the iron, which the historian might have struck when it was so beautifully hot, is already cooling in the air of a less fevered day. The ambitious biographer, as a more gifted writer might say in a City column, is caught a bear of Hohenzollerns; in the Miscellaneous Market Huns are rather a languid feature (what a gift they have in Throgmorton Street for rich, pictorial metaphor!); and Attila closed soft.

That is why it seems rather a pity that a brilliant young man is upon us, nearly twelve months after the closing of the Ministry of Information, with the discovery that "Frederick's military reputation was in excess of his deserts, owing to misrepresentations made by himself or by others on his behalf. . . . He lived in a chronic state of premature despair . . .

and indulged freely in tears . . . on the battlefield he gave several exhibitions of cowardice . . . he ordered the refusal of quarter, treated prisoners and wounded with inhumanity, bombarded cathedrals and cut down fruit trees: and received from his contemporaries the name of the 'Attila of the North.'"

This has the ripe, authentic tang of the vintage of 1914. One hangs breathlessly on the historian's lips to hear the tale of how Frederick flung a sneer at Maria Theresa's "contemptible little army," ordered his submarine commanders to sink the Saxon food-ships at sight, and sent Montgolfiers to drop grenades on the most populous portions of Vienna. Instead, one finds only rather tittering anecdotes about his bad style, his aversion for washing, and his neglect to shave.

It was not easy for a son to survive the paternity of Frederick William I; but he achieved it. It was not simple to fight the Prussian corner through the Seven Years' War, to stand

up against Russia, France, and Austria with no more substantial ally than British sea-power, of which no Admiral Mahan had yet explained the sovereign qualities to an obedient world; but he managed it, living, as they say, from hand to mouth—and if, as his biographers delight to tell us, it was sometimes a shaking hand and a wry mouth, one is not really so very surprised. It was not child's play to recreate Prussia into a position of European significance after the war was won: the reconstruction of victorious countries has since that day been worse done by better men than Frederick. But his biographers show a singular lack of interest in the administrative achievement of the twenty years of peace which form the second and less dramatic chapter of his reign. It is a pity, because Frederick was never more the Hohenzollern in his versatility or more the German in his thoroughness. But perhaps our historians feel that he was not quite sufficiently the Hun.

The final interest of the Frederician *épopée* lies in the fact that the king was the fine flower of European monarchy in its later form. Kingship, which had resulted in the first instance from the hero-worship of primitive times, waned like a candle in the dawn before the fierce sunlight of the later Reformation. The units which composed the European state-system became too large in the early Seventeenth Century to be manipulated by a single pair of hands. The increasing complexity of the world dictated the relegation of important duties to mere ministers at the same time as philosophers were beginning to feel what Mr. Max Beerbohm has called "a horrid doubt as to the Divine Right." But in a final effort monarchy returned upon Europe in a new form. If the king could not be the tallest, the strongest, or the richest man in his kingdom, he would at least be socially supreme. The thing began with the unamiable posturings of Louis XIV, and radiated from Versailles through the Western World. It was perhaps

typical of the age of deportment that it expressed its veneration of its masters in the niceties of etiquette rather than by the clashing of sword-blades upon shields. Such was the seed-bed which produced the revival of kingship in the middle Eighteenth Century, when France, Russia, Prussia, Austria, Spain, Portugal, Naples, Piedmont, and Tuscany slowly pirouetted, each to the tune of its single dynast, and even England stumbled into the measure played by King George III. Of this time and temper Frederick is almost the most typical product. His intellectual *liaison* with Voltaire ranked him with that crowned *Intelligentzia* of which the Empress Catherine was the most entertaining and the Emperor Joseph the most industrious member; and that blend of absolutism and enlightenment, which led him to gratify a passion for administrative detail in the intervals of playing on the flute and composing Alexandrine verse, was characteristic to the last degree.

He reigned for forty-six years ; and when he died, the storm of the Bastille was only three years distant, and men must almost have heard the sound of the tumbrils coming up the wind. There was not a king left in Europe to hold the pass for kingship. The fumbling intellectualism of Austria, the dullness of that heavy man, France, Prussia with his mystics and his bigamy, England's alternations of rusticity and mental collapse, Naples who kept an eating-house *incognito*, the stupid Spain who offered himself to the pictorial obloquy of Goya and never noticed the caricature—these were hardly the men to stand up against the burning wind that swept from the Place de la Révolution across Europe. For the last of the kings had died in a room at Potsdam.

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